



The

Valley Patriot

"Congress shall make no law..."

****FREE****



Volume 1, Issue 1

March 2004

16 Pages

Valley Patriot Exclusive!

School Committee Bills Taxpayers for Fine Dining

Tom Duggan

For the past three years members of the Lawrence School Committee have been billing the taxpayers for plush dining at the city's most expensive restaurant: One Mill Street.

Then School Committeemen Noah Shannon, Pedro Arce, Suzanne Piscitello, Nancy Kennedy and current member George Gonzalez all dined with Superintendent Wilfredo Laboy and his staff after school board meetings running up tabs worth over \$1,200.00.

Documents obtained by The Valley Patriot show that state taxpayers treated members of the Lawrence School Committee to more than a dozen expensive meals between 2001-2003.

Meal reimbursement receipts show School Board members helped themselves to veal, sirloin steak, calamari, pork chops, duck, steak salad, garlic shrimp, mussels, scallops, spinach chicken, assorted appetizers and other various menu items. The meals were then billed to the Lawrence Public Schools which receives 100% of it's funding from the state and federal government.

While Superintendent Laboy's \$156,000 a year contract does not include a meal allowance, he says that some of his expenses are reimbursable. "I don't have a meal allowance but it is accepted



"...the Ethics Commission should be informed about this. They should pay back every penny with interest and issue a written apology to the school children and the citizens of Lawrence."

*Michael Sweeney
Lawrence School Committee*

practice for me to be reimbursed for certain expenses as long as they are reasonable and sensible," he said.

School Committee members, on the other hand, do not have that luxury. According to the School Committee policy (B-18) "School Committee members shall receive no compensation for their services. However, upon submitting vouchers and supporting bills for expenses incurred in carrying out specific services *previously authorized* by the Committee, Committee members may be reimbursed from district funds." This never took place regarding meal receipts from One Mill Street.

Instead, some School Committee members took advantage of their position as

Continued on Page 8



Lt. Governor Kerry Healey with Maria Marasco

Andover's Marasco Campaigns for Reform

Valley Patriot Staff

Boston- State Rep. Candidate Maria Marasco (R-Andover) received a campaign boost from Lt. Governor Kerry Healey in Boston last week at her first fund raising event in preparation for her formal campaign announcement for 18th Essex State Representative. The district spans six communities, including her hometown of Andover, North Andover, Boxford, Haverhill, Methuen and Georgetown. The seat is currently held by first term incumbent Barbara L'Italien (D-Andover).

"Maria is exactly the right kind of person who will best represent her district," said Healey. "Maria has the right kind of skills to help us reshape government in an effective way," she said. Marasco supports the governor's efforts to cut waste and mismanagement in state government.

"I will stand by the Governor and Lt. Governor to make responsible reforms. As

Continued on Page 5

Smith v. Smedile for N. A. Selectman

Valley Patriot Staff



While North Andover School Commit-tee-man Al Perry has no challenger for his seat, Selectman Rosemary Smedile is facing a familiar face to the voters in her bid for reelection.

Joe Edward Smith, an engineer by trade and a union Democrat, says his campaign is about open government and representing issues important to the town voters. "There is a big difference between Ms. Smedile and myself," he said. "Before the voters decide who will represent them on March 30th it is important that they know what those difference are."

"I opposed the trash transfer station and Ms. Smedile supported it." Smith also said Smedile supported leasing half the airport land adding, "the people of North Andover clearly wanted it sold off. It is important to represent the people of the town and act on their behalf." Smith says he opposes \$95,000 in raises for nonunion employees "especially at a time when we are talking about laying off fire

Continued on Page 13

Sullivan: "Absent All Auto Fraud, Insurance Rates Won't Go Down!"

Tom Duggan



"...if you call the Board of Insurance today and ask them... 'if the auto fraud goes away completely (in Lawrence), at what point will the rates go down?' They will tell you what they told me last week, they won't."

*...Lawrence Mayor,
Michael J. Sullivan*

Lawrence - Mayor Michael Sullivan says that even if police investigations are capable of eliminating all auto insurance fraud in the City of Lawrence, "auto insurance rates still won't go down."

Sullivan, touting the hard work of Police Chief John Romero and the Lawrence Police Department, said that the investigations into auto insurance fraud in Lawrence were producing startling results but added, "If you call the Board of Insurance today and ask, just for example, 'if the auto fraud goes away completely (in Lawrence) at what point will the rates go down?' What they will tell you is what they told me last week, they won't."

For years, State Legislators, previous mayors and police chiefs have been telling Lawrence residents that the high auto insurance rates in the city (the third highest in the state) are the result of insurance fraud. Sullivan says that simply isn't the case.

"What we are finding out is that, what will cause rates to go down (in Lawrence) is for the rest of the cities and towns in the state to tackle fraud in their communities as well. It would have to be a statewide effort. I think the insurance companies, years ago should have been doing the investigative work that the Lawrence police are doing this year."

Continued on page 7

Syndicated Columnists



Neil Cavuto
Page 4



Thomas Sowell
Page 14

ALSO INSIDE:

Rabbi Goldstein on "The Passion"



Page 15

2003 Police Line of Duty Deaths by Craig Floyd

Page 3

Profile of Andover School Candidates

Page 13

Dr. Charles Ormsby - Thinking Outside the Box

Page 3

Paying Attention!

Page 4

N. Andover Selectman Race, Smith v. Smedile

Page 5

Senior News/Senior Centers

Pages 10 & 11



Valley Patriot *Editorial*

Let the Market Dictate Insurance Rates

Mayor Sullivan wants the legislature to modify the formula for auto insurance rates. The solution lies not in tinkering with government regulations, but in eliminating them.

Massachusetts' legislators have been trying to engineer our auto insurance system for decades and they just can't seem to get it right. But don't blame them entirely for poor engineering. A government planned insurance market is bound to lead to inequities, inefficiencies, and illegalities ... not to mention higher accident rates, injuries, and deaths.

Only the magic of competition and the profit motive can ensure that premiums accurately reflect risks, reward safe driving practices and minimize fraud.

Consider two groups of drivers. The first is systematically overcharged considering the risks they pose while the second group is being undercharged. In a free market insurance system, companies would be rewarded for discovering any factors (age, driving record, zip code, health, profession, marital status, children, past claims, ... even shoe size, if it helps) or any combination of factors that would help them discover who was being over or under charged.

By appropriately lowering the rates charged to the first group and raising premiums for the second group, a company can attract the most profitable customers and avoid unprofitable customers ... and in the process, improve their profitability compared to other insurers. Those that fail in this task will have lower profitability or even incur losses and risk going out of business. The market automatically and efficiently establishes rates that are fair for all.

But insurance premiums must cover both legitimate accident claims and the costs associated with fraud. The company that does the best job of uncovering fraudulent claims can set lower rates (thus attracting a greater volume of business) and can simultaneously achieve higher profit margins. Fraud will come to a screeching halt and average insurance rates will come down.

The profit motive ensures that premiums are fair, that safe driving practices are rewarded (thus both reducing accident rates and premiums), and that fraud is minimized. All without the mindless bureaucracy of government regulations corrupted by politics and self-serving industry lobbyists.

The current auto insurance fraud scandal in Lawrence was unnecessary. Blame the crooks and the insurance companies, but also blame our legislature.

Mayor Sullivan, let's not have the legislature reinvent the system, let's just tell them to get out and stay out!

Suggested Massachusetts auto insurance law:

M.G.L. Ch.1234 – Auto insurance contracts are private agreements between consenting adults. Absent fraud, have a ball ... Don't call us, call your insurance company. If you don't like your current insurance company or insurance rates, find another company. If you think they are all over charging, consider getting rich by starting your own insurance company. End of law.

Valley Patriot of the Month James Cassidy

Each month, The Valley Patriot will pay tribute to members of the community who embody the values of American patriotism by their service to our country and/or their work in the community. This month's Valley Patriot is James Cassidy

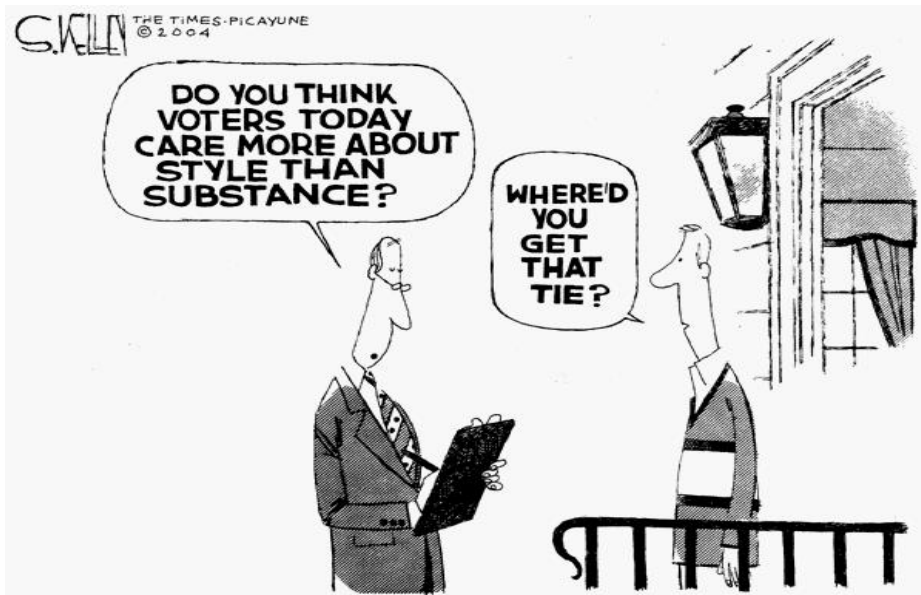
of North Andover. Cassidy is the Commander of the American Legion, POST 219 in North Andover. He served in World War II as a combat infantryman in France and Germany.



Mr. Cassidy continues serving his country and community as a Board Member of the North Andover Council on Aging, a volunteer for Friendly Visitors with the North East Elder Transportation, Chairman of The Men's Breakfast and Discussion Club, a founding member of the North Andover Taxpayer's Association and a member of the VFW Post #2104, North Andover.

The Valley Patriot pays tribute to Mr. Cassidy for all of the selfless dedication he bestows onto our country and community.

If you would like to nominate a "Valley Patriot" please email us at: ValleyPatriot@aol.com, send mail to 47 Brightwood Ave, No. Andover, MA, 01845, or you can fax us at (978) 258-1964



Letters

Torrissi's Attack on Catholics Should Not Be Forgotten

To the Editor:

I am writing today to express my utter disappointment and abhorrence of the arrogance shown by Representative David Torrissi towards his constituents and his questionable faith as a Roman Catholic.

The Representative is quick to use his faith and proclaim his Catholicism, but he does not live his faith and he does not listen to his constituents.

All we asked in the Marriage Amendment during the Constitutional Convention was to let the people vote! If he did not have the courage to vote for the sanctity of marriage, he should have let us vote on it.

Instead, as has his history shown, he continues to thumb his nose at the very people he was elected by, to serve them not the loud vocal minority of gay agenda people pushing their lifestyle upon us.



North Andover State Rep. Dave Torrissi during 2001 subcommittee testimony of gay marriage opponents at the State House.

They already have the rights that we all do, and they have decided to push their agenda upon us. Who is being tolerant? Certainly not the gay community who want it only their way and the heck with everyone else.

David Torrissi has further assisted this great divide with his cowardice and unwillingness to listen to his constituents and has decided that he knows better than we do.

I think it is time for David Torrissi to be voted out of office along with all of the arrogant politicians who refuse to listen to the voters.

John A. Cronin
North Andover

Computer repair & offsite system backup
Specializing in anti-virus
& anti-spyware removal

AMK Computer Repair



Home and Office Visits

Contact: Bob Kneeland 978-681-6339

"Disaster Recovery - Lost Files Found."

The Valley Patriot is published by:

Valley Patriot, Inc.

All contents (c) Copyright, 2004

47 Brightwood Ave., North Andover, MA 01845
Phone - (978) 557-5413 Fax (978) 258-1964

Email - ValleyPatriot@aol.com

The Valley Patriot is printed at the beginning of each month. The Valley Patriot is not liable for errors appearing in advertisements provided to us. All ad copy must be submitted seven days prior to publication. Subscriptions to The Valley Patriot cost \$14 and are delivered via U.S. mail.

Advertising Director: Paula Porten

President: Tom Duggan, Jr.

Vice President/Director:
Ralph Wilbur

Layout: Tom Duggan, Jr.

Treasurer: Dr. Charles Ormsby

Our Voice is Your Voice

The Valley Patriot welcomes letters to the editor on any topic. We also welcome column/article submissions from elected officials, neighborhood associations, community organizers and newsmakers. Our mission is to give readers the unique opportunity to receive important information from those who are driving important public issues without the "creative editing" policy employed by most newspapers. Submissions from guest columnists/writers in The Valley Patriot are published without the filtered agenda of an editorial board. If you would like to write a column, letter or article for The Valley Patriot, please email us at: ValleyPatriot@aol.com



Lives Lost for Liberty

Police Deaths, in the Line of Duty

Craig W. Floyd

President, National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Almost every day this past year we have heard the reports of new casualties in the fight for freedom—another assault, another injury, another death.

A few of the casualties drew national attention, but most remained faceless and nameless, just another statistic to add to the growing total of lives lost for liberty. Sadly, it has gotten to the point where we seem to take these human sacrifices for granted.

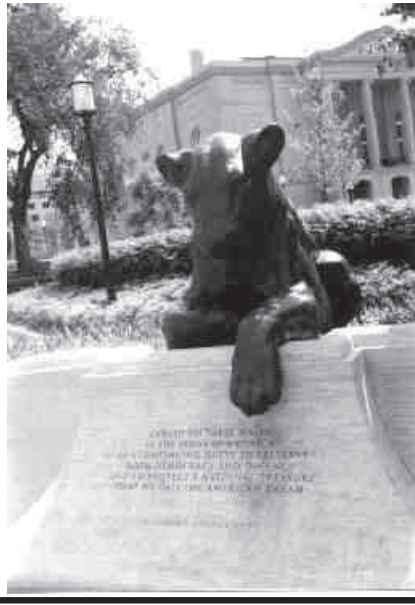
Paul Harvey, America's beloved voice of radio, once defined news as "something exceptional, unusual." Well, maybe that helps to explain why these mounting casualties do not even receive front-page attention anymore. In a way, I suppose, we have come to expect and, thus, accept death as the cost of freedom.

The war and subsequent occupation in Iraq has resulted in the loss of nearly 500 U.S. soldiers this past year. And, each and every one of those brave men and women—and their families—deserve our utmost respect and gratitude. But, the casualties I am referring to did not occur in Iraq. They occurred here at home, on the streets of America. We do not call them soldiers. We call them law enforcement officers.

Last year, our nation lost nearly 150 federal, state and local law officers in the line of duty. If history is any indication, another 60,000 officers were assaulted and about 20,000 of those assaults resulted in injury.

This marks 54 consecutive years that more than 100 law enforcement officers have been killed in the performance of duty. During the last 10 years alone, more than 1,600 officers have died.

Preliminary data shows that of the officers who died last year, 53 died in automobile accidents; 52 of them were shot to death; 13 were struck and killed by vehicles; 11 died in motorcycle accidents; six succumbed to job-related illnesses; four drowned; two suffered fatal beatings; two fell to their deaths; one was



The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial was built entirely with private donations. Congress donated the federally owned land on Judiciary Square.

stabbed to death; one died in an aircraft accident; one was electrocuted; one was strangled; and one was hit by a train.

Thirty-eight of the 50 states, as well as Puerto Rico and one federal agency suffered at least one officer fatality last year, with California at the top of the list with 18 deaths. Even Vermont, which has had only 15 law enforcement fatalities in their entire history prior to 2003 - by far the fewest of any state in the nation - had two police officers killed last year. In other words, there is not necessarily any rhyme or reason when it comes to law enforcement sacrifice.

If you are a police officer, that life-threatening moment could come at any time, or any place.

But, be assured, these sacrifices have not been in vain. We're told by the people who keep such statistics that violent crime in our country has declined by almost 50% since 1993.

Continued on Page 12



Thinking Outside the Box!

Dr. Charles Ormsby

Liberty, A Lost Concept?

We thank God for Liberty. Bands play, soldiers march, and hands cover hearts. Our flag is a symbol of Liberty. Millions are flown, anthems are sung, pledges are made, and allegiances are sworn. We cherish our history of Liberty. Founding fathers are immortalized and shrines are built. We fight for Liberty. Politicians call us to arms when it is threatened. We offer our sons and daughters to protect it.

Liberty is almost universally heralded but rarely expounded. Liberty is praised but left conveniently abstract so it will not interfere with the practice of government. It is impolite to mention Liberty when the latest government program is unveiled, the necessity of a new regulation is asserted, or the latest tax increase is proposed. What does Liberty have to do with these? Not very much if Liberty has no core meaning, or no value beyond parades, and flags, and sentiment.

Maybe we should dust off Liberty and decide if we really believe in it. We shouldn't be afraid to do that. If Liberty has lost its relevance and has no meaning, so be it. Let's be honest and say so. Honor those that died for it and move on. In modern parlance, we should "Get over it!"

If, on the other hand, we bring it into focus, rediscover its real meaning, and find that Liberty has value, then we should apply the concepts of Liberty to our laws and to our political institutions. Do our laws and institutions further Liberty or undercut it? If the latter, we need to choose. Do we really believe in Liberty?

Maybe we don't really crave Liberty (or even want it). We can't know until we rediscover what it is. Let's start from the beginning. What is Liberty? In a political context (which is all that is relevant here), Liberty pertains to the rights of man (no gender intended, here or later) to act as he chooses and to use and dispose of his property as he chooses, without interference from government, so long as in so doing he does not interfere with the equal rights of others to do likewise.

Liberty is a simple but revolutionary concept. It is a concept that protects all individuals and limits the abuse of government power. It frees man and constrains the state.

Don't expect governments to embrace "Liberty-The-Concept", only "Liberty-The-Symbol." "Liberty-The-Symbol" can be used to manipulate, to control, to gain allegiance. "Liberty-The-Concept" diminishes governments' dominion over

man. It gives back to mankind the deeds to their lives.

You may be unsure and wonder, "Should we embrace Liberty? Should man have the right to act as he chooses and to dispose of his property as he chooses as long as he does not interfere with the equal rights of others?" What is the alternative? If man doesn't have these rights, who chooses what he can and cannot do? Why should others be able to decide for him if he can't decide for himself?

[Remember we are not discussing actions that infringe on the equal rights of others. Such infringements are the natural dominion of governments and law. Indeed they are the justification for the very existence of governments and law.

As Bastiat wrote: "What, then, is law? It is the collective organization of the individual right to lawful defense... It is the substitution of a common force for individual forces. And this common force is to do only what the individual forces have a natural and lawful right to do: to protect persons, liberties, and properties"]

You may posit that a group (e.g., a majority) should have the power to decide. But if no individual has the right to decide, how does a group gain this right? Except by force or the threat of force, it can't.

When such force is exerted (or threatened) to defend individuals from the use of force initiated by others, it represents a legitimate extension of the rights of self-defense of the individual members of society.

When it is exerted (or threatened) to deny man the right to act when such actions do not infringe the equal rights of others or to expropriate an individual's property gained through consenting interactions with others, it represents a usurpation of power that has no legitimate basis.

If a man's actions do not interfere with the equal rights of others, what legitimate interest do others have in forcefully restraining these actions? If their interest is not rightful, i.e., if their interest is to derive unearned value by constraining or compelling another man's actions or to take his lawfully acquired property for their own benefit, isn't this use of force nothing more than theft?

Continued on Page 14



Mom,
Happy 87th
Birthday!



I can never repay all the gifts you have bestowed. You are loved more than you can know. Have a really wonderful Birthday!

—Your Son—



James Bracken
Managing Partner

569 Chickering Road (Rte 125) at Chickering Plaza

North Andover, MA 01845

Phone 978-682-8829 * Cell No. 978-857-5332

What a pain in the class!

Neil Cavuto



They call it class warfare. For the life of me, I don't know why.

There's nothing classy about pitting one group of people against another.

There's nothing classy about telling the rich in this country that their gains are somehow ill-gotten.

There's nothing classy about saying the rich get back more money but never saying boo about the simple fact they pay more money — a lot more money.

And there's nothing classy about lying. Because truth be told, this isn't about us and what we're paying. It's about the government and what it's keeping.

Some people really like the government, trust the government and want to give more money to the government. I am not in that camp. I am in the camp that says I'd much sooner trust you with your money than any bureaucrat with your money.

But it's more fundamental than that. The reason why I find myself throwing things at the television every time I hear Democratic candidates speak is that they all but say they hate rich people. Rich people are greedy. Rich people are selfish. Rich people don't deserve a break.

Well, give me a break! Look, I've known rich people who were fools and poorer people who were fools. Trust me on this one, charlatans know no pedigree, and decency knows no salary range. You can make a lot of money and have zero scruples or make no money and have no scruples.

But I'll tell you this: Most rich people I've known are good, hard-working, start-from-scratch people. Contrary to the impression that they've somehow come into this world with silver spoons in their mouths, government statistics show the vast majority of John Kerry's targeted \$200,000-and-over crowd is self-made. If they have a silver spoon, they bought it with their own money and their own sweat.

You know, not once in my life has a poor person hired me. Rich guys, or at least richer guys, did. Trust me, they weren't all saints, but all the ones I've

known were willing to give this Italian-Irish kid from working-class roots a chance . . . whether it be scooping ice cream in a shop or churning out perfume in a factory.

Poor people get their breaks from rich people. The government can hand out a check. But the rich guy makes an investment. There's a fundamental difference here that marks the very essence of capitalism. The best way out of the gutter isn't a payment from a bureaucrat but an opportunity from a businessman.

The class of our system of government is that it doesn't distinguish between classes at all. All can share in the American dream if they toil long enough and sacrifice enough. Some have neither the appetite nor work ethic to bother with this, but that doesn't mean we abuse those who do.

Only in America can we turn on those who made this country great and tear them down precisely because they are.

Look, I'm not saying we have to all shout a big thank you, but they're due a hell of a lot more than a screw you! There's nothing classy in that argument, just as there's nothing classy in saying that the rich don't already more than foot the bill.

The top 1 percent of wage-earners in this country account for more than a third of the taxes collected in this country. The top 5 percent pay more than half. If that's getting off lightly, what's considered getting hosed?

You make more in this country. You pay more in this country. It was that way before the president's tax cuts. It's been that way since the president's tax cuts. It's amazing to me that bureaucrats who suck off the system are bashing the guys who give 'em the milk!

That's the real class story.

Pity there's not a politician with the class to report it.

Neil Cavuto is managing editor of Business News at FOX News Channel. He is also the host of "Your World with Neil Cavuto" and "Cavuto on Business."

COPYRIGHT 2004 NEIL CAVUTO
DISTRIBUTED BY CREATORS SYNDICATE



Paying Attention!

Tom Duggan, Jr.

Devers Has it Right More Speech is Always Better

When Lawrence City Councilor Marcos Devers was council president (2001-2003) there were no limits on discussion. Members of the public and fellow councilors had no limit on debate as long as the topic was on the agenda.

Devers had a basic philosophy that his fellow councilors would be wise to adopt; more speech is always better. Unfortunately, the Lawrence City Council is now entertaining a proposal to limit discussion and debate on all issues, relevant or not.

Sure it may be inconvenient when the public or even fellow councilors abuse their right of free speech. But to put an arbitrary time limit on all debate stifles legitimate discussion and ties the hands of the council president when issues like the city budget, for example, warrant an evening long debate.

It is true that during Devers' tenure as Council President some councilors made campaign speeches knowing that the meetings were being televised on government access channel 22. It is also true that some councilor would drone on and on, repeating themselves ad nauseam, resulting in very long meetings, sometimes lasting until 1 or 2am.

But, the council president always had the right to cut off debate. The fact that Devers chose not to, or that future presidents may

be afraid to, is no reason to set a policy limiting debate or discussion on important city matters at a government meeting.

City Council meetings are not supposed to be structured for the convenience of the councilors. Marcos Devers understands that and publicly opposes the policy to cut off speakers who might have more to say. Given the history of back room deals and last minute changes made to public proposals before a vote the result of such speech limits would be chilling.

But Devers seems to be a lone voice in the wilderness on this issue. At last count, the proposal submitted by newly elected City Councilor Israel Reyes seems to have the support of the majority of the council. That's a shame.

While it is understandable for councilors to try and move the meetings along, putting a time limit on all debate, legitimate or not, flies in the face of everything this country stands for.

There is no need for this kind of proposal. The Council president simply needs the courage to use his gavel when the situation warrants. If his fellow councilors disagree with his ruling they can always challenge him and vote to overrule. That is, unless that kind of speech is limited next.

You can write to Tom Duggan by sending an email to Tdugjr@aol.com



TOWER HILL VARIETY & SUBS

101 Ames Street, Lawrence
978-682-7222

FAMILY OWNED SINCE 1978

OLD FASHIONED HOMEMADE COOKING

- HOT & COLD PARTY PLATTERS
- SUPER SUBS
- FAMILY STYLE DINNERS
- COLD CUT TRAYS
- HOT & COLD SUBS
- HOMEMADE MEATBALLS
- OLD FASHION CHICKEN BARBS
- HOMEMADE SOUPS

•• EVERY TUESDAY •• EVERY TUESDAY

TUESDAY'S TRADITION

FREE CAN OF PEPSI WITH THE PURCHASE OF ANY SMALL OR LARGE SUB

HOURS Mon-Fri 8am-7pm, Saturday 9am-5pm

WE ACCEPT MASTER CARD & VISA
MASS LOTTERY AGENT



*We're located down the hill from
Lawrence's Historic Reservoir Tower*



Sachs Financial Planning

Kathleen R. Sachs, CFP
Certified Financial Planning

11 Gloria Road
Georgetown, MA 01833 - 1033

978-352-8769
Fax 978-352-2767

kathysachs@netway.com

Marasco Gains Support

...Continued from page 1

someone with broad experience in both the private and public sectors, I will look at reforms in their entirety, not only to save money, but to redirect scarce funds to where they'll be needed, not wasted."

"I support merging the Mass. Turnpike Authority with Mass Highway to save \$20 million annually. Funds saved can be used to improve our schools and increase local aid. The taxpayers' money will serve our Commonwealth much better in those areas than it would supporting the duplication of services and endless patronage jobs of Beacon Hill insiders," said Marasco.

A businesswoman and lawyer, Maria Marasco was appointed to help reform government by three previous governors from both parties. Marasco's business talent helped her effectively manage several state agencies. She served as one of the youngest Executive Directors in state government

During the 90's, Marasco worked to reform reporting systems at the state pension fund, developed plans to reduce government backlogs, and assisted all Executive Branch agencies in the state to cut regulations and comply with the 1996 Regulation Reform Project. Marasco currently runs a nonprofit breast cancer early detection center.

On the issue of gay marriage, Marasco said, "In matters of such monumental social importance, the voters have the sole right to decide. They should be able to vote up or down as provided by our state constitution." Marasco is personally opposed to changing the traditional definition of marriage and believes it is the optimum structure for raising strong



Lt. Governor Kerry Healey Touts Marasco's Experience During a Boston Fund Raiser

families. In a recent poll published by the Boston Globe, 71 percent of Massachusetts voters said gay marriage should be decided by the voters in a statewide referendum election.

"The incumbent (Barbara L'Italien) not only voted against the will of the people, she voted against their right to have a voice on the issue," Marasco said.

Representative L'Italien was quoted in the Eagle-Tribune that she expected the gay marriage issue could help cause her defeat. L'Italien voted against the amendments thus far which would have allowed her constituents the right to vote on this issue.

Marasco has already enlisted Jean Inman, entrepreneur and former Massachusetts GOP Chairwoman, as her campaign chairman. Inman is best known for serving as state director for Senator John McCain's campaign for President and has been friends with the Senator since 1997.

Inman says, "I knew Senator McCain was a special kind of politician when I first met him. Maria Marasco has much of the same dedication and passion for serving. Maria will make a great representative for the people to reform government."

Book Keeper's Corner

Dr. Charles Ormsby

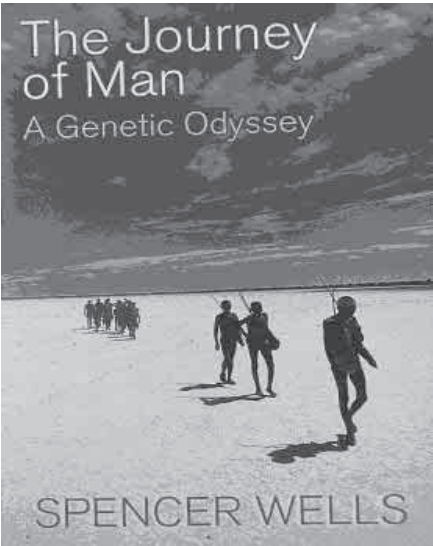
"The Journey of Man, A Genetic Odyssey" by Spencer Wells is about a breakthrough: A breakthrough as big as Darwin's theory of evolution.

Mankind has long wondered about its origins and how we came to inhabit the remote regions of the earth. All of the "W"s [Who, what, when, where, and why] of our origins and ancient wanderings were unknown or murky. For the first time, thanks to DNA research, we have a coherent story to tell about our past.

Wells, a world leader in population genetics research, unravels the mysteries of human history ... not the kind of history that you read in history books that deals with hundreds or, at most, several thousand years, but the kind that spans tens of thousands of years ... 60,000 years to be more specific.

"The Journey of Man" is really a winner on several fronts. First, it answers numerous age-old questions: How old is the human species? Do we have a common ancestor (i.e., was there an Adam or Eve)? Where did we originate? Why have different races emerged? When did we migrate to different geographic regions of the earth? Did major population groups ever collide and with what effect? Were we related to the Neanderthals? ... and many more.

Second, Wells provides critically important insights into genetic science and how DNA-based tools were used (with corroboration from geological and



anthropological findings) to unlock these ancient mysteries. Some of the discussion occasionally becomes a little technical (e.g., references to polymorphisms, nucleotides, and mitochondrial DNA) but the author always provides adequate layman's explanations.

Finally, the reader is brought along on an exciting journey that spans the globe from Africa to Australia to Asia and Europe, and finally across Beringia (now the Bering Straight) to the Americas. Along the way, one mystery after another is solved and the overall picture of our history emerges.

"The Journey of Man, A Genetic Odyssey" is a remarkable book; one that tells an amazing story ... our story. Don't miss it. This book is a "Keeper"!

The Journey of Man, A Genetic Odyssey is published by Princeton University Press.

**Best wishes and much
success on your first edition of**

The Valley Patriot!

Bob and Dot Comeau -Lawrence

HELP WANTED

SALES POSITION

The Valley Patriot!

**Contact: Paula Porten at
(978)-557-5413**

JOB OPPORTUNITY!!

North Andover School Committee

High Pay (\$2,000/year) and Potential for Advancement

Desired Qualifications:

- Advanced Degree in Mathematics or Science
- Committed to Demanding Curriculum
- Insistence on High Academic Standards
- "No Excuses / No Nonsense" Philosophy
- Willing to Question Traditional Constraints

Bonus pay, expense accounts, foreign travel, sick days, personal days, overtime differentials, town car, & holidays are not negotiable.

**Call Chuck Ormsby at (978) 682 8569
DISCLAIMER: NOT AN OFFICIAL POSTING**



www.mvshd.com

**MERRIMACK
VALLEY**



SCHOOL OF HAIR DESIGN

315 East Haverhill St.

**Lawrence/Methuen Line
Just look for the purple awning !!!**

978-688-1133

Hair Cuts \$8.00 - \$15.00 & Manicure \$7.00
Coloring \$15.00 and up - Shampoo & Set \$7.00
Call for additional services

HAIR CARE & NAIL PRODUCTS

* k-pak * joico * nolita * opi * matrix
* paul mitchell

Birthday Parties

**Does your daughter, niece or granddaughter enjoy having
her hair and nails done. Have a party for her and her
friends to be made up. Call for party packages**

**NOW ACCEPTING ENROLLMENTS FOR
NEW STUDENTS**

**WE ACCEPT
Visa & MasterCard**

**MVSHD RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CHANGE
PRICES AND PROCEDURES WITHOUT NOTICE
ALL SERVICES WILL BE PERFORMED BY STUDENTS**

The Havoc Wrought by Today’s “Modern” Math

Dr. Charles Ormsby

If you are a parent of elementary school children, you’ve probably seen it: elaborate make-work homework assignments, cutting and pasting extravaganzas, overly complex and roundabout procedures to add or multiply numbers, estimation exercises that won’t quit, and the use of calculators in place of traditional arithmetic methods.

You thought: “Of course, the educational professionals must know what they are doing. Once my children catch on to these clever techniques, they will develop into mathematics geniuses!”

Unfortunately, what you discover is that they never learn the core facts and methods, their confusion grows, they lose their self-confidence, they decide they just can’t do math, and you are stuck paying for tutoring. Even worse, children who might have become exceptional mathematicians, engineers, or scientists are denied their rightful future.

What went wrong? Years ago the educational establishment decided that teaching mathematics had to either consist of rote memorization (without real understanding) or students had to discover mathematics through trial and error because it was assumed that only if they discovered it themselves would they truly understand it.

While this view presented a false choice (there are much better alternatives), the educational community was sold on the second alternative because it had an intellectual cache that was lacking in “rote memorization.” What resulted was the various “modern” math curricula for our children that underemphasized learning math facts, that bend over backward to avoid teaching standard methods for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, and that refuse to teach traditional processes for manipulating fractions.

Almost all our public schools today use one of the “modern” math curricula and millions of promising math-based technology careers are being ruined every year.

Permit me a short excursion. I have a technical/engineering background (PhD MIT ’74) that rests largely on advanced mathematics. One reason I followed this path is that, as a student, I always had poor memorization skills and, therefore, subjects such as biology, chemistry, and foreign languages were very difficult for me. I loved math and physics because there was very little memorization; I could derive

any formula I needed during a test. “Understanding” was a much more powerful asset for me than memorization. If anyone would be inclined to favor understanding over memorization it would be me. But modern math is a disaster. I’m convinced that if I had been “taught” math with it 50 years ago, I would probably have become a poet (my English teacher is rolling over in her grave).

So, do I favor just rote memorization? Of course not. Successful math education requires that students learn the techniques that true geniuses have developed over the last 3000 years. You may think the standard technique used to add numbers is trivial (place value concepts, carrying, etc.), but it was not obvious to the ancient Greek philosophers. Multiplication, long division, and fractions are even more complex.

Teaching the techniques first and then exploring the underlying concepts and why these techniques work is the most efficient way to achieve true understanding. If Socrates and Aristotle couldn’t invent our modern arithmetic system, why do we think the typical third or fourth grader can?

The impact of “modern” math on students in the US has been devastating. Just look at how the US stands up against other countries. The United States ranks 19th.

Place an equal emphasis on method mastery AND conceptual understanding, and you have the makings of a powerful elementary math curriculum. A curriculum that leads to real learning, that builds self-esteem and, rarest of all, a child that comes home and says, “Hey mom, I really love math!”

This approach to math education is not new. It is what a well-taught traditional mathematics course always emphasized. In some cases, poor teaching may have led to over-emphasis on rote memorization drills, but that is no reason to stop teaching the critically important mathematical methods.

How are we doing with early mathematics education in this area? As the table shows, not very well. While the differences in scores between towns/cities may be accounted for by socio-economic factors, the percent of students who are not proficient (meaning they scored as “Needs Improvement” or “Warning/Failing”) in fourth grade (90% in Lawrence, 60% in Methuen, 50% in North Andover, and 34% in Andover) cannot be excused. Even worse is the lack of progress after four more years of what passes for math “education”.

The trend towards “modern” math may finally be slowing. Parents are upset with the lack of a rigorous math curriculum and the need to hire tutors or enroll their children in remedial after school programs.

A nationwide movement is growing to expose the failures of “modern” math and restore an academically sound curriculum.

If you are interested in learning more you should go to:
www.mathematicallycorrect.com

Dr. Ormsby is a member of the North Andover School Committee. You can e-mail Dr. Ormsby at ccormsby@comcast.net

| 2003 MCAS SCORES (% ADVANCED OR PROFICIENT) | | | |
|--|-------|-----|-----|
| | Grade | | |
| Town/City | 4th | 6th | 8th |
| Andover | 66% | 76% | 66% |
| Lawrence | 10% | 9% | 9% |
| Methuen | 40% | 41% | 34% |
| North Andover | 50% | 51% | 60% |
| AVERAGE | 42% | 44% | 42% |

THE BOY SCOUTS ON THE FRONT LINES by Harold Johnson

The following article, authored by Pacific Legal Foundation attorney Harold Johnson, exposes the assault being made by agencies of oppression against long held beliefs and values that Americans should be able to embrace without interference by the state. The Pacific Legal Foundation, headquartered in Sacramento, California, provides a voice that fills the void for citizens who have grown weary of overregulation by big government, over-indulgence by the courts, and excessive interference in the American way of life. – (Ralph Wilbur)

A Washington, D.C. court hearing [on September 10, 2002] offered a sobering reminder that 9/11 did not, in fact, change “everything”. The proceedings, at the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, dealt with a government rebuke of the Boy Scouts of America last year for dismissing two Washington-area Scout leaders because they’re gay. The Scouts asked the court to overturn the June 2001 command by the District of Columbia Human Rights Commission that Michael Geller, 39, and Ronald Pool, 40, be readmitted as adult members and receive \$100,000 in damages.

Although the Commission submitted no briefs of its own (angry members of Congress had denied the agency funding to defend its decision), lawyers for Geller and Pool didn’t give an inch at the hearing. They insisted that the Scouts cannot be allowed to escape the District’s anti-discrimination law, and the hefty fine was right and just.

Carla Kerr, an attorney for the Scouts, reports that the judges questioned the Geller and Pool attorneys aggressively. But even if the appellate ruling favors the Scouts, the fact that they had to go to court to win back their rights highlights some disturbing continuities between pre- and post-9/11 America. Not all of today’s agents of destruction work with bombs, bullets or box cutters. There are saboteurs in coats and ties as well—social and cultural saboteurs, some with government or academic status, who continue their long-running siege against venerable institutions that have nourished the nation’s soul. The Scouts remain a prime target. They are loathed by the Left for resisting reeducation on sexual morality and for transmitting a cultural framework, stressing God and country, that was supposed to be marginalized by now.

Most of all, perhaps, the Scouts are hated simply as an obstacle to the Left’s Taliban-

like project of imposing a general conformity of thought on the country. Lovers of liberty—even those who might disagree with Scouting’s membership policies—should toast the Scouts’ tenacious stand for the First Amendment and the right not to be [politically correct].

The District of Columbia assault on the Scouts may be unique in one respect: its unusually direct defiance of the United States Supreme Court. In the 2000 case of *Dale v. Boy Scouts*, the Court settled the question that the D.C. bureaucrats have tried to reopen. A five-justice majority ruled that the Scouts are free to follow their own philosophical precepts. Therefore, government—New Jersey, in the *Dale* case—can’t compel the Scouts to admit avowed homosexuals as leaders.

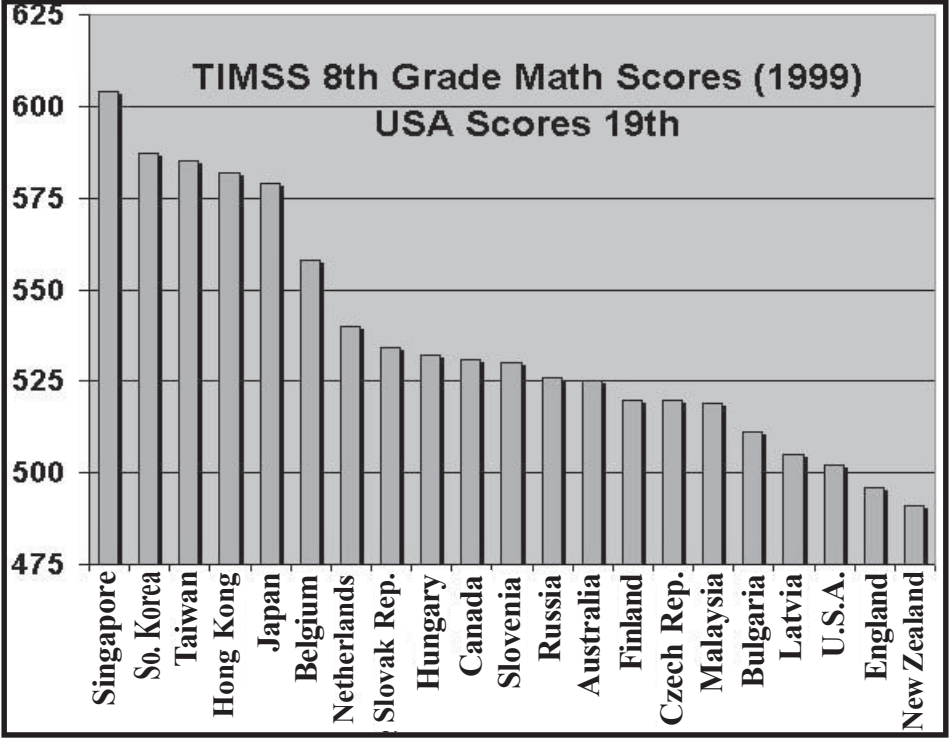
The Commission claimed that the case it dealt with differs from the case of New Jersey assistant scoutmaster James Dale because Pool and Geller were not public about their homosexuality. But the Supreme Court’s teaching in *Dale* still applies: a private, philosophically based organization is free to craft its own creed and tailor membership rules accordingly.

The Commission also accused Scouting’s leaders of lying, in effect, when they say that Scouting considers homosexuality incompatible with the Scout Oath’s pledge to stay “morally straight.” The Commission alleged that the Scouts haven’t held this belief historically. It touted as “evidence” the fact that formal position statements were drafted only in recent years. If this line of argument sounds familiar, it’s because New Jersey tried to sell it to the Supreme Court in *Dale*. Writing for the majority, Chief Justice William Rehnquist declined the invitation to instruct a private organization on what it does and does not believe. The Court in *Dale* accepted Scouting’s own interpretation of the Scout Oath and the Scout Law.

So, the District of Columbia Human Rights Commission has demonstrated about as much respect for Dale as southern school districts showed for *Brown v. Board of Education* when they waged “massive resistance” to desegregation orders in the 1950s. Like *Brown*, *Dale* is a civil rights decision; it affirms liberty of association and freedom from thought codes. A “Human Rights” commission worthy of the name would honor *Dale*, not subvert it.

Most of the recent government assaults on the Scouts have not been as shamelessly

Continued on page 12



Student Ambassador



Catherine Castillo (center) receives recognition from the Lawrence City Council. A resolution was presented to her by Council President Patrick Blanchette (right). Also pictured, State Rep. Willie Lantigua, (I) Lawrence.

Lawrence resident Catherine Castillo, a 10th Grader at Phillips Academy in Andover was invited to participate in the Massachusetts *"People to People"* Student Ambassador Program in England and France this summer.

"People to People" was established in 1956 by President Eisenhower. Participating students will meet with governmental officials, interact with other students, and participate in educational activities.

Random Thoughts

Mark Palermo



Last time I checked, Methuen was still part of the Union. Why, then, could somebody in town hall have even entertained the idea of going into people's homes in order to count unreported pets? Sounds like a bit of North Korea in New England, doesn't it? Imagine if they could have gotten away with this and set a precedent. It could have spread to my town and yours: I fear for my two parakeets which I have failed to report to the proper authorities.

Hopefully, those responsible for this atrocious idea are kept under adult supervision long enough so that they might bone up on the Fourth Amendment.

I don't mean to pick on Methuen. A few years ago voters there showed more common sense than any surrounding community in rejecting fluoridation of their drinking water. They had enough class to engage in a spirited public discourse, as well as the good sense in rejecting this unwise, unconstitutional and unhealthy practice.

Fluoride is safe and natural? Good for teeth? Tell that to the parents of three-year-old William Kennerly, who died in a dentist's office when he swallowed, instead of spit out a stannous fluoride rinse while the hygienist was engrossed in conversation. He died in a hospital emergency room later that day of fluoride poisoning. The story was reported on the front page of the New York Times of January 20, 1979.

Like to take a drink or two in the privacy of your own home? Well, now a new test has been developed by a team of researchers in Switzerland.

From the testing of a mere strand of your hair, it can detect how much liquor you have been drinking. Not only can they go back months, but they can even tell what kind of liquor and the number of drinks you imbibed on any particular day. Well, here's looking at you, kid. I predict short hair will be back in style soon.

"What this country needs is a good five-cent cigar." Thus spoke then-vice president of the United States in 1920. In 2004, what the Merrimack Valley needs is a number of independent newspapers to balance the pervasiveness of the Tribune's one-dimensional world view. Where are the antitrust laws when you need them?

The primary goal of newspapers is to sell advertising, not to report truth or to enlighten readers. The Tribune bought up almost all the small community newspapers in the area. Then the Tribune bought up the local radio stations. As a result The Merrimack Valley gets almost all its regional news from one source-which is the standardized, filtered version that the Tribune and its sponsors approve.

Fidel Castro recently gave a four-hour speech to economists from around the world gathered at a conference in Havana. He talked about free national health care in Cuba and a lower infant mortality rate than in the U.S., adding that "a Cuban ninth-grader could win a debate with President Bush." Well, I'd have to say that President Bush is not an articulate man, in fact I think he could do well with some diction and ESL classes. But as far as Castro's claims, I

Lawrence: Insurance Fraud...

Continued from Page 1

Asked why insurance companies have done nothing to curb fraud, Sullivan replied, "The insurance companies have been too quick to settle these cases because they don't want big legal bills. These large insurance companies have the tools to really go after fraudulent accidents. They haven't done that but I think that's starting to change."

"I'm going to tell you how easy it would be for these insurance companies to investigate the fraud. Insurance companies keep a name log of all accident victims and anyone who has filed a claim. If they just analyze who was in more than 4 accidents in a 12-month period throughout the state, as the Lawrence police are doing now, they can break down the data on those accidents and take a lead role in investigating these cases. The only way Lawrence rates are going down is for fraud to go down throughout the state. That has to start with the insurance companies themselves."

The Lawrence police have been arresting business people who have been profiting from fraudulent injury claims. Sullivan says there are even more arrests coming and it isn't just chiropractors participating in the fraud. "In the next couple of weeks you are going to see more information come out about attorneys and (other) chiropractors involved in this, it isn't just the drivers involved," he said of the ongoing investigation.

One local attorney who asked not to be named, said that even lawyers and auto shops are cashing in, paying people to file false claims and charging for work that is not needed.

Since the death of a Lawrence grandmother during a staged auto accident last year, the Lawrence police have been investigating "hundreds of cases of fraud" according to Police Chief John Romero. Romero said a task force has been formed including the FBI, Essex County District Attorney Jon Blodgett, Attorney General Tom Reilly, the State Police, and insurance investigators from every company doing business in Massachusetts. .

"We are unmasking new cases every day," Romero said. "My advice to people is this: If you, or someone you know, were involved in auto fraud or a staged accident in the last few years, you are better off coming to us and talking to us because, eventually, we will be coming to talk to you," he said. "We have signed affidavits from people who admit their involvement in staged accidents." Romero says that in

don't see anybody risking life and limb to get into Cuba, only to leave in desperation. I wish Castro, now 77 years old and still a champion of the American left, would explain this. Then he should tell us how many political prisoners are rotting in Cuban jails.

Isn't it ironic that during this same time frame Haverhill lost its only English language radio station and its daily newspaper? To be replaced by the Eagle Tribune. Let this be a lesson to other communities about what can happen when nobody is on duty to watch the hen house.



"Just to give you an idea of how widespread this is, we have found auto theft rates have gone down 33%" since police publicly announced their investigation into fraud cases in the media.

**John Romero
Lawrence Police Chief**

the short time they have been investigating insurance fraud the Lawrence police have also uncovered some startling information regarding other crimes. In the ninety days after it was reported in the press that Lawrence police were making arrests, car thefts in Lawrence decreased a full 33%.

"This shows that about one-third of the cars stolen in the City of Lawrence are taken specifically for the purpose of staging accidents to defraud the auto insurance companies," Romero told the residents of Mount Vernon at a neighborhood meeting.

"If the city stops auto fraud completely tomorrow," he said, "in the eyes of the state that will still not effect a decrease in our auto insurance rates. We need to shine a light on this problem and convince other communities to start combating the problem or auto rates in Lawrence will never go down. It's that simple."

Mayor Sullivan said once this case is over he is afraid the media attention will go away and the problem will go on as it has for years throughout the state. "We have to put a stop to this. This is my \$3,000 dollars I pay for insurance, just like everyone else who pays auto insurance in the city."

For his part, Mayor Sullivan says he has a plan for decreasing insurance rates for Lawrence residents.

"I am working with our legislators to change the structure on how our policies are drafted in the first place. It shouldn't be based on your zip code. It should be based on your driving record. I want to see legislation that says, 'it doesn't matter where you live, if you are a good driver in Lawrence or a good driver in Haverhill, your rates should be the same. If you are a step nine, your rates should be the same regardless of zip code.'"

Don't be surprised if you are missing a few eggs, or in the case of Haverhill, most of your hens. And it is a testament to the importance of independent papers like this one. Whether we agree with them or not, they provide a valuable service in reporting what politicians are doing with your rights and how they are spending your tax money.

Mark Palermo is a professor at Northern Essex Community College where he is vice president of the faculty union, and coordinator of the annual Northern Essex Foreign Film Festival.
Email Mark Palermo at
markpalermo@lycos.com

Board Feasts on Steak, Veal, Shrimp...
...Continued from Page 1

members of the School Committee Finance subcommittee by eating at One Mill Street and then signed off on the meal receipts as legitimate educational expenses.

Laboy said he submitted the School Committee meal receipts because it was the least he could do for them. “These people (School Committee members) put in a lot of hours and they work very hard for our children. I think buying them a meal is the least we can do for them after a long meeting. The School Committee members are not compensated in any way, shape or form for their service. I don’t find it offensive or excessive to pay for a person’s meal when they work so hard.”

The problem is, Laboy didn't pay for the meal, state taxpayers did; a fact that angered some current board members who demanded repayment for the meals. School Committeeman Michael Sweeney said "each member who received a free meal should pay back every penny to the children of Lawrence."

“I think their actions are reprehensible,” Sweeney said of Piscitello, Gonzalez, Shannon, Kennedy and Arce. “Particularly Ms. Piscitello. Of all people, she should be writing a check out to the school department for everything she ate. I also think the Ethics Commission should be informed about this. They should pay the money back with interest and issue a written apology to the school children and the citizens of Lawrence.”

On at least one occasion, a quorum of the School Committee (six of the seven members) met at One Mill Street for what Laboy listed on receipts as a “School Committee meeting/Discussion at One Mill Street.” (see right) With a majority of the board present, Laboy admitted the meeting was not publicly posted as required by the state’s open meeting law because, he said, “it was a social event.”

Asked why he submitted meal receipts to the taxpayers totaling \$141.25 for a “social” gathering he admitted, “It was partially business. Business was discussed.”

Mayor Michael Sullivan who sits as chairman of the School Committee said he doesn't believe Superintendent Laboy did anything wrong, however, he added, "I think the members of the finance committee who signed off on those warrants should pay the money back. Absolutely."

“I don’t think it’s appropriate. As political leaders we have to be held to a higher standard. If it is outside the educational setting it isn’t right that their meals should be treated by the taxpayers.”

Sullivan said that the School Committee policy must be adhered to. "It all flows back to the policy. We have a policy and we all need to abide by the policy."

School Committeeman Jimmy Vittorioso said he was outraged when he learned about the School Committee meals.

“It’s a disgrace. It’s a waste of taxpayers’ money. I would never go out to dinner using the people’s money. That’s a serious conflict of interest. For committee members to go to Mill Street and send the taxpayers a bill is outrageous. I actually agree with Mayor Sullivan, they should pay the money back.”

School Committee member Amy McGovern said that she had only gone to

"For committee members to go to Mill Street and send the taxpayers a bill is outrageous. I actually agree with Mayor Sullivan, they should pay the money back."

Jim Vittorioso
Lawrence School Committee

Mill Street “once” with fellow board members and left early when she realized there was a quorum because she felt uncomfortable with the whole situation. “I know they do this all the time but I was very uncomfortable with it,” McGovern said. “All I had was a diet coke and I left a few dollars on the table to pay for my drink. I just don’t think it’s right. It’s abominable.”

Heidi Pearlman, spokesman for the Department of Education said the matter of School Committee members getting free meals is an issue for the Ethics Commission not the Department of Education. "Was it appropriate for them to have meetings at an expensive restaurant," she asked rhetorically, "probably not. But this is a local issue for local officials to deal with. This is not an issue for the Department of Education."

It was a stark contrast to the position taken by the Department of Education when misspending allegations against former superintendents Jim Scully and Mae Gaskins surfaced in previous administrations.

In 1987 the Department of Education threatened the School Committee to fire Jim Scully or they would take over the Lawrence School System. The Department of Education was also intimately involved in the Gaskins firing.

Ironically, former Superintendent Mae Gaskins was fired, in part because she billed the taxpayers for 32 bags of Cape Cod potato chips (totaling \$77.13), a meal at Palmers Restaurant in Andover (\$75.57) and a meal order from Lawton's Hot Dog Stand which included two hot dogs, a large order of fried clams, a large order of onion rings and ice tea for a total of \$16.35

At the time of Gaskins' firing, then School Committeeman Suzanne Piscitello (who is listed on several meal receipts at Mill Street) led the charge against Gaskins for what she called "a disgraceful waste of our children's money," which she said was "robbing our children of the educational dollars they need for their future."

Piscitello told the Eagle Tribune in January of 2000 that the precedent set by the firing of Jim Scully for what she called “questionable expenses” had to be maintained by Gaskins and future superintendents. “You can’t have one standard for one Superintendent and another standard for another superintendent.”

Sweeney said Piscitello's involvement with the One Mill Street meals was "the height of hypocrisy."

“It’s obvious that public office isn’t the place for either one of them (Piscitello and Arce). As alleged professionals they should know better. If the Gaskins case was still in court we would be in a boatload of trouble on this. I mean, not only is Piscitello a former assistant superintendent and vice president of the School Committee, but her added role in the Gaskins firing pours a can of gasoline on the fire.”

Lawrence School Committee's Lavish Dining Tab: \$1,213.69

*December 5, 2001 "School Building Construction orientation meeting" with Noah Shannon (School Committee) and Kevin McCarthy" at One Mill Street for \$30

* December 13, 2001 "Recognition/farewell dinner for newly elected and departing School Committee members at One Mill St." The attendees were not listed. Receipt shows \$137.00 for meals.

*January 31, 2002 "School Committee Meeting/discussion at One Mill Street on 01/31/01 with School Committee members," Suzanne Piscitello, Nancy Kennedy, Pedro Arce, Jorge Gonzalez and Noah Shannon as well as Sal Petralia for a total of \$141.25.

*February 4, 2002 - "briefing/update on school committee meeting with Mayor Sullivan." One Mill Street, \$34.00

*February 26, 2002 - "Meeting with School Committee members to discuss outstanding School Committee items." Present were School Committeeman Suzanne Piscitello and School Personnel Director Sal Patralia. Though the taxpayers were only billed \$34 for the food, the One Mill Street receipt shows they were served seven glasses of wine while discussing school business.

*March 14, 2002 - “preliminary Budget Workgroup with School Committee members,” Nancy Kennedy, Pedro Arce and Noah Shannon as well as Sal Petralia and Kevin McCarthy – at One Mill Street for \$62.00

*March 14, 2002 - Meeting at One Mill Street with School Committee member Suzanne Piscitello and staff member Kevin McCarthy for \$53.55

*May 16, 2002 School Committee members Nancy Kennedy, Suzanne Piscitello, George Gonzalez joined the Superintendent and Personnel Director Sal Patralia at One Mill Street for a total of \$79.80.

*August 22, 2002, - "School Committee working dinner" with Mary Lou Bergeron and Sal Petralia. \$36.00

*September 30, 2002 – “debriefing for presidential visit” (president of the Dominican Republic) with Kevin McCarthy, Al Molina plus a second bill submitted for October 8, 2002 for a total of \$91.35 on same reimbursement order. School Committee members not listed.

*October 29, 2002 - "School Committee debriefing" at One Mill Street, with Mary Lou Bergeron (Assistant Superintendent) and Sal Petralia for a total of \$27.04.

*December 11, 2002 & December 16, 2002 -
 “crisis team management debriefing) One Mill
 Street with School Committee member Suzanne
 Piscitello, staff members Kevin McCarthy, Sal
 Petralia, Mary Lou Bergeron, and Albert Molina.
 Bill Total \$96.84

*March 13, 2003 - "School Committee dinner meeting" with School Committee members Suzanne Piscitello, Noah Shannon, Nancy Kennedy and staff members Sal Petralia and Mary Lou Bergeron for a total of \$90.30

January 9, 2003 - "FY'04 budget session with School Committee members" at One Mill Street with Nancy Kennedy, Noah Shannon and staff members Sal Petralia and Mary Lou Bergeron, dinner total \$110.25

*February 13, 2003 - High School Project Meeting with School Committee members Noah Shannon, Suzanne Piscitello dined with Superintendent Laboy, and his staff: Sal Petralia, Mary Lou Bergeron, Kevin McCarthy, Chris Molina and Ann Marie Sheehan for a total of \$190.31

*January 23, 2003 –Dinner/Planning Meeting with Sal Petralia and School Committee member Nancy Kennedy totaling \$75.34.

LAWRENCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
LAWRENCE, MASSACHUSETTS

EXPENSE REQUEST*

NAME Wilfredo T. Laboy
SCHOOL Central Office
GRADE/OR SUBJECT Superintendent

DATE 2/4/02

PURPOSE OF EXPENSE REQUEST: School Committee meeting / discussion @ One Mill Street on 1/31/01

OUT-OF-STATE REQUEST INFORMATION

ONE MILL STREET
@ ONE MILL STREET
(978) 738-8900

2655 GS
JAN09'03 9:03PM

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| @ 8.00 | |
| CALAMARI W/ MOJO | 16.00 |
| ARTICHOKES | 8.00 |
| PORK CHOP @ 18.00 | 54.00 |
| VFC. IE SAND | 8.00 |
| NEW YORK STRIP | 19.00 |
| 18.00 % | |
| GRATUITY | 18.90 |
| FOOD TOTAL | 105.00 |
| SVC CHG TOTAL | 18.90 |
| TAX | 5.25 |
| TOTAL DUE | \$ 129.15 |

FINAL EXPENSES

Conference, Workshop Fees: \$ _____
Meal(s) \$141.25
Lodging _____

ONE MILL STREET
@ ONE MILL STREET
(978) 738-8900
CHARRISSA

2487 GST 14
DEC13'01 8:49PM

| | |
|------------------|------------------|
| FRENCH ONION | 5.00 |
| SPICY CHIX WINGS | 7.00 |
| @ 8.00 | |
| CALAMARI W/ MOJO | 16.00 |
| @ 9.00 | |
| GARLIC SHRIMP | 18.00 |
| SPRITTO MUSSELS | 8.00 |
| CUP DU JOUR | 3.00 |
| NEW YORK STRIP | 19.00 |
| SALMON | 17.00 |
| CAESAR CHICKEN | 9.00 |
| CAESAR SALAD | 6.00 |
| PORK CHOP | 17.00 |
| GREENS W/ VINAIG | 4.00 |
| O RINGS | |
| MISC FOOD | 0 |
| COCO MANGO | |
| HOMEMADE ICE CRM | 5.00 |
| 18.00 % | |
| GRATUITY | 24.66 |
| FOOD TOTAL | 137.00 |
| SVC CHG TOTAL | 24.66 |
| TAX | 8.08 |
| TOTAL DUE | \$ 169.74 |

Sweeney said the revelations about free meals at One Mill Street explains an ongoing question regarding his former colleagues, "...at least now we know why School Committee Meetings used to last only half an hour. They all wanted to get to Mill Street before last call."

Suzanne Piscitello did not return calls from The Valley Patriot to be interviewed for this story.



A lighthearted North Andover Superintendent, Dr. Harry Harutunian demonstrates the safety shower at the new High School science lab.



Milicent Wakeman, 7, was industrious enough to take advantage of the crowd at North Andover's temporary Town Hall on the day property taxes were due. She is pictured here selling Girl Scout Cookies to Diana Headrick of North Andover, from the back of her mother's car. Milicent is the daughter of N.A. Selectman Wendy Wakeman.

Parade Marchers Will Not Return to Lawrence

Lawrence's Saint Patrick's Day Parade will be minus a few loyal participants this year after repeated incidents of verbal assaults on military and ROTC recruits during last year's event.

Members of the Saint Patrick's Day Parade Committee said they were "very surprised" and "really hurt" to learn that Lawrence residents had attacked parade participants last year. "I just couldn't believe it," said Parade organizer Marie Gosselin. "We started hearing from several marchers from last year saying they had been harassed and verbally assaulted. They all said that they would not be participating in the parade anymore."

Gosselin said she asked the Pinkerton Academy ROTC to please put their experience in writing (see letter, right) after more than half a dozen people told her similar stories.


Gosselin also said she was having a hard time getting the Lawrence Public Schools to participate this year, and added that the schools she contacted would not give her a reason. Some didn't even give her the courtesy of returning her calls to let her know why they wouldn't be marching in the parade.

Gosselin said the parade will still be held Sunday, on March 14, as scheduled.

Let's hope there are no more incidents like last year.

PINKERTON ACADEMY
5 Pinkerton Street
Derry, New Hampshire 03038-1501

603-437-5200



Mary A. Anderson
Headmaster

Nick Ithornis
Principal

Michael Morin
Assistant Principal, Curriculum

Graham Bode
Assistant Principal, Instruction

Glenn Ahrens
Jody Hinds
Julie Machakos
William Patrician
Elizabeth Rodrick
Charles Vamey
Assistant Principals
Attendance & Discipline

3 February 2004

Pinkerton Academy AFJROTC
5 Pinkerton Street
Derry, NH 03038

Marie Gosselin
4 East Gilbert Street
Lawrence, MA 01843

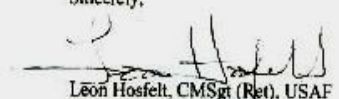
Dear Marie,


We send this letter in regards to the telephone conversation concerning our decision to not participate in the Lawrence St. Patrick's Day Parade.

The situation that prompted our decision was the harassment we received while marching in the parade. We received jeers concerning our represented service and our state. "The Air Force Sucks". "Go back to New Hampshire where you belong--pigs"


We realize your committee cannot control the crowd's behavior; however, we are compelled to not expose our students to this type of abuse. Again, we truly regret this situation happened and hopefully can return to participate in the future.

Sincerely,


 Leon Hosfelt, CMSGT (Ret), USAF
 Aerospace Sciences Instructor
 Pinkerton Academy AFJROTC




Accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.
and the New Hampshire State Department of Education



New North Andover High School - \$58.5 Million Dollars...

Not Having Dr. Allen here on the first day of school...



PRICELESS!

(c) Copyright, The Valley Patriot, 2004

If you have an idea for "Paula's Picture Captions," email Paula Porten at ValleyPatriot@aol.com

Gas Piping & Heating

Radiant Floor Heating

Sprinkler Systems
Installed & Repaired

Custom Additions
& New Construction

Water Heaters
(Same Day Service)

Bathroom Remodeling
& Repair Work

Replacement
Boilers & Furnaces

From a Leaky Faucet to a 10 Story Building



KANNAN & PRICONE
PLUMBING & HEATING INC.
COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL • RESIDENTIAL
978-685-0880

kpplumbing@netway.com
3 W. Ayer Street
Methuen, MA 01844

Serving the Merrimack Valley
Since 1985

Free Estimates

Fully Insured

Senior Citizen Discount

Financing Available





* Mass. License #10286
* N.H. License 2849
* Sprinkler Contractor License #005807ICE

Senior Moments

Jim Cassidy

—And a pleasant day to all of my fellow senior citizens—or should I say those beautiful, responsible and dependable older adults who continue to fight the aching backs, gimpy knees, arthritic hands and other aches and pains associated with the advancing years—and every day get up and out of bed to stay active and productive citizens of the Merrimack Valley and beyond.

We are not alone. In our valley area there are over 100,000 of us, adding to the economy and the good life of our families.

If we are fortunate enough to be in relatively good health, we continue to act as patriarch or matriarch of our families, still guiding our children, grand children and others.

—Yes, life is good if you are a healthy senior with a family, outside interest, living at home and have a decent retirement income.

But, what's out there to help our many seniors who seek assistance, medical and financial advice or just plain old companionship because they have outlived their families or because of age have become frail and vulnerable?

—Do not fear, for we are there for all of you!

There are many Senior Citizen Centers available throughout the valley area for your assistance.

Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley, Inc. is your starting point for assistance.

Telephone
800 892-0890

I am personally quite familiar with the North Andover Senior Citizen Center where I have been a volunteer for many years in a variety of programs.

I can remember going down to this center many years ago (was I ever that young?) to have a blood pressure reading.

My first impression was—gee, there's a lot of old people here! But you know the more times I visited them and got involved in helping with some of their programs, these old people got younger before my very eyes. The energy and enthusiasm shown by hundreds of lively volunteers were and still are inspiring to me—and it will be for you too, so check it out.

I cannot emphasize enough not to stay at home alone, but call or come to one of the centers for the many programs that are available for your needs. This will continue to make your life more enjoyable and productive.

—In North Andover alone there are 4600 seniors residing in their own homes, in some type of housing units or in nursing homes, most on a fixed retirement income and all of us are in the same boat. We must stick together. The centers throughout the valley will help you ride out the storms and at the same time will improve your quality of life.

Some important programs available at all centers:

1. Meals on wheels; a hot nutritious meat delivered daily to those home bound seniors.

Continued on Page 14

LEGAL CLAIMS AGAINST NURSING HOMES IN MASSACHUSETTS ON THE RISE

Valley Patriot Staff

Nursing home litigation is a fast growing area of legal practice in Massachusetts. With approximately 600 nursing homes in Massachusetts and over 50,000 nursing home residents at any given time, issues of abuse and neglect are increasing everywhere.

Of course, the nursing home industry blames Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement rates as the problem. "But the real problem stems from poor management and a philosophy of profit over care by nursing home administrators" states Attorney David J. Hoey, who has been representing victims of nursing home abuse and neglect for six years.

Hoey says that, by representing seniors who have been abused or neglected in nursing homes, he believes he has improved the quality of life for those living in nursing homes and, at the same time, developed a practice that can be financially rewarding.

For many years, attorneys in Massachusetts took little interest in pursuing nursing home cases based on the mistaken belief that an injury to an elderly patient was not financially worth pursuing.

Recently, there has been greater recognition that nursing home cases do, indeed, have value and, in some instances, multi-million-dollar values. Hoey says he has been successful in such cases.

The majority of nursing home cases involve permanent injuries. Common injuries or health issues suffered by nursing home residents include: burns/scalding, dehydration, malnutrition and loss of weight, bedsores, aspiration, fecal impaction leading to septic shock, broken

hips and fractures, physical/mental abuse, over or under medication, gangrene, urinary tract infections, and poor physical or dental hygiene. Not only do these and other injuries or health issues impact quality of life, in some cases they can be fatal.

While many family members may be hesitant to file a lawsuit or even speak to an attorney, it is important to remember that the threat of a lawsuit is an incentive for nursing homes to improve the quality of care.

Atty. Hoey says that he has seen a dramatic decrease in nursing home abuse and neglect in Massachusetts in the six years he has been representing nursing home residents and their families.

The nursing home industry has lobbied for tort reform and for caps on recovery. By claiming that the high cost of malpractice insurance is due to increases in the number of lawsuits and the size of jury verdicts, the nursing home industry has been successful in putting such reforms in place in many states.

However, attorney Hoey says that if one were to examine whether insurance premiums for nursing homes have decreased in those states that have instituted tort reform, the answer would be no. Atty. Hoey is quick to point out though that improving the quality of care in Massachusetts' nursing homes should start with educating the public and properly training the care givers and that litigation should be the last option.

Atty. David Hoey will be a contributing columnist in The Valley Patriot. For more information you can email David Hoey at: hoeylaw@earthlink.net or visit him on line at www.hoeylaw.com



MERRIMACK VALLEY SCHOOL OF HAIR DESIGN SENIOR CITIZEN SPECIAL

\$5.00 SHAMPOO & SET

\$5.00 MANICURE

\$5.00 SCALP TREATMENT

Tuesday April 6 through Thursday April 8 - 9:00am - 2:00pm

"JUST LOOK FOR THE PURPLE AWNING"

315 EAST HAVERHILL STREET • LAWRENCE, MA 01841

at the intersection of Marston/East Haverhill

978-688-1133



Your Ad Here

Hey! Your reading this right? That means other people are reading this too. So why aren't you advertising in The Valley Patriot? Don't you think it would be better if people were looking at YOUR advertisement instead of reading this? Call at 978-557-5413 and ask for Paula Porten.

HOEYLAW

Law Offices of David J. Hoey

1-877-LAW HOEY or

(877) 529-4639

hoeylaw@gateway.net

**"We represent seniors
who have been abused
or neglected in nursing
homes"**



SENIOR CENTERS ARE HERE FOR YOU!

by Bernard Reilly, Executive Director
Lawrence Council on Aging

Nearly every community has a multipurpose senior center. Over 8 million older adults participate in the approximately 9,000 senior centers throughout the United States. The center is a hub for activities and services for older persons, and a visible symbol of the community's concern about its older residents. The center has many functions – that's why a senior center is called "multipurpose."

The multipurpose senior center is a community facility in which older people can meet with one another to fulfill many of their social, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs. It is also a focal point for services to, and by, older persons. Center programs and activities can help older persons enhance their dignity, support their independence, and encourage their involvement in and with the community.

Senior centers provide access to community resources as well as to services and activities that maintain independence and wellness. Individuals interact and interrelate in many kinds of senior center programs. Older persons form a community of mutual interests in which all concerned benefit from a balanced, meaningful, and enjoyable program of individual and group services.

THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION!

Older men and women benefit through social interaction with individuals of various ages, through educational programming, counseling, health promotion, employment counseling and placement, recreational activities, and volunteer opportunities. They come to senior centers for many different reasons: to meet other people, to participate in specific activities, or to obtain specific services to provide a seamless continuum of care. Those who come bring their talents, skills, and values. The range of program opportunities is rich and varied enough to supply each individual with particular resources needed at that point to continue growth and development.

DIVERSE ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES AVAILABLE THROUGH MULTIPURPOSE SENIOR CENTERS

CENTER VOLUNTEERING: Board participation, committee participation, policymaking, teaching classes, clerical.

EDUCATION: Consumer classes, discussion groups, leadership development, newsletters.

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE: Employment counseling, job aptitude testing, job placements, job training.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: Tax Aid, Social Security information, Medicare information.

HEALTH: Health promotion, nutritious meals, physical exams, screening, immunization, nurse, and physician services.

INFORMATION, REFERRAL AND COUNSELING: Legal and financial, health and nutrition, housing and

consumer, employment and retirement.

RECREATION: The arts, newsletter, dancing, movies, music and drama, parties and celebrations, crafts, physical fitness, sports, table games, tours and trips.

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY: Advocacy, legislative testimony, public relations, speakers bureau.

TRANSPORTATION: For shopping, appointments with doctors, field trips.

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY: Friendly visiting, community fund drives, school aides.

Senior Centers offer an open, unintimidating environment to engage older adults in areas of their choosing, while providing supportive services as needed.

SENIOR CENTERS BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY!

IN HEALTH PROMOTION:

- Senior centers screen thousands of older persons each year for high blood pressure and other health problems, and refer them to their physicians for follow up.

IN ACTIVITIES:

- Aerobics groups are popular activities for senior center participants. Senior centers offer a range of other activities ranging from employment counseling and consumer education to trips.

IN COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

- Outreach programs often identify isolated older people. Many will eventually participate, with their peers, in programs at the center.

IN NUTRITIONAL MEALS:

- Senior citizens enjoy nutritious daily meals at the center. For homebound elders the center will organize meals on wheels to be delivered to their homes.

Locate Your Senior Center

Lawrence Senior Center
155 Haverhill St. Lawrence
(978) 794-5885

North Andover Senior Center
120 Main Street, N. Andover
(978) 688-9560

Andover Senior Center
36 Bartlett St., Andover
(978) 623-8321

Methuen Senior Center
77 Lowell St. Methuen
(978) 681-4950



North Andover Senior Center, Main St. North Andover

Medical Diagnostic
Healthcare Corporation
A Non-Profit Organization

**Digital Mammography
& WELLNESS CENTER**

Maria Marasco
Director of Marketing and Development

59 Longwater Drive - Norwell, MA 02061
tel: 781.878.4004 - fax 781.878.4075

ELECT

ELECT

Joe Edward Smith

CANDIDATE FOR SELECTMAN



Army Veteran, Principal
Civil Engineer, Notary
Public

North Andover resident
since January 1977

Member of Town: N.A.

Zoning Board of Appeals, Zoning Task
Force Member, American Legion, Rotary
Club, and Saint Michael's Church, State
Engineer 1979 till Present (DCPO/
DCAM)-Office Planning, Design &

Construction State Engineer's Union (M.O.S.E.S.) Executive, Board
Officer and Steward (14 years) Trustee at Heritage Green
Condominium Trust



We need you, your family, neighbors and co-workers to go to the polls on **March 30, 2004** and give Joe Edward Smith your vote for Selectman! Let's fight for a **cleaner environment**, equitable funding for education, larger return from the state of **our tax dollars**, as well as **smart government spending**, expansion of **our tax base** and **equal access** and input in Town government **decision making**.

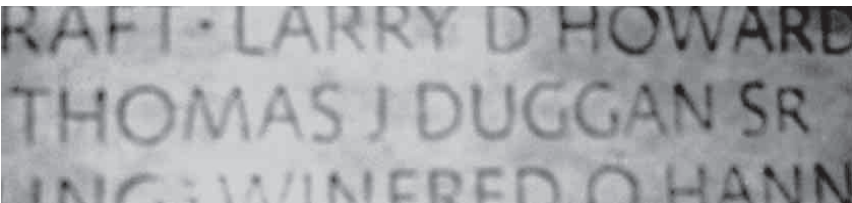
Let me know your concerns! (978) 689-0845 or joeeds@msn.com

*One of our fellow town's people cites some history regarding the importance of **one vote**:*

*In 1645, one vote gave Oliver Cromwell control over England
In 1649, one vote caused Charles I of England to be executed.
In 1845, one vote brought Texas into the Union.
In 1868, one vote saved President Andrew Johnson's
Impeachment.
In 1941, one vote saved the military draft.*

"It's not the critic who counts; It's not the one who points out how the brave man stumbles or how the doer of deeds may have done them better; It's the one in the arena, who's face is covered with sweat, dust and tears!" -Teddy Roosevelt

Paid for by The Committee to Elect Joe Edward Smith
16 Irving Road, North Andover 01845



Slain Lawrence police officer Tom Duggan's name appears on panel 36W of the National Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial in Washington, DC. along with the names of more than 14,000 police officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty dating back to 1792. Duggan was killed (March 19, 1990) after eighteen years on the police force.

Merrimack Valley Police Officers Killed in the Line of Duty

Andover:

1925 - Robert Black

N. Andover:

1981 Joseph Lawlor

Lawrence:

1953 - Peter Manning

1990 - Thomas Duggan

Methuen:

1908 - Francis McDermot

1908 - Charles Emerson

1923 - Arthur Bower

1966 - Walter Buddy Hird

1974 - Rolad Kinlock

For more information about line of duty deaths or to contribute to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund you can write to 400 7th Street, NW Suite 300 Washington, DC 20004 - or you can visit the Memorial on the world wide web at www.nleomf.org

Lives Lost for Liberty, Craig Floyd

Continued from Page 4

In fact, the FBI just reported on December 15 that the overall violent crime rate during the first half of 2003 dropped by another 3.1 percent. Incredibly, this means that despite the best efforts of drug traffickers, gangsters and terrorists, America is safer today than at any time in the last 25 years.

As it turns out, America is also a safer place for our law officers. Just consider that since the 1970s, when 224 officers were killed on average each year, police fatalities have decreased by more than 25 percent. In fact, the odds of being killed in the line of duty if you are a police officer today are about one in 6,000.

Thirty years ago, about one out of every 1,500 officers made the ultimate sacrifice. More officers, who are better trained and equipped than ever before, are the major reasons for this improved level of police safety.

Later this year, all of the names of the officers who died in 2003 will be inscribed on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C.

It is a fitting honor for a deserving group of Americans. But, our obligation to those fallen heroes goes much deeper. We must never take human sacrifice for granted and we must never accept death as the cost of freedom, whether it occurs abroad or here at home.

For more information on line of duty deaths or to contribute to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund visit us at:
www.nleomf.org



Kids Corner

A Book Review for Kids

by Hanna, age 9

The Hundred Dresses

I recently read the book, *The Hundred Dresses*, by Eleanor Estes and I really recommend it. This story is realistic fiction because it could be true to life yet is mostly from the author's imagination. In the beginning of the story, Peggy would ask Wanda every day how many dresses she had and Wanda would always answer, "I have 100 dresses all lined up in my closet."

The girls at her school would bully and make fun of Wanda's dresses and of her last name because they were long. They laughed behind her back too. But one day it got out of hand and the teacher got a letter stating that Wanda would not be going to school anymore.

Later that day, Peggy and Maddy wrote to Wanda because they felt bad. Finally, Wanda wrote back and said that Maddy and Peggy could keep two pictures that Wanda left at school. The pictures, however, were really of Peggy and Maddy and then they realized that Wanda really liked them.

I can relate to this story because even if I am not a bully now, I do not want to become one now that I know what might happen. Being a bully is mean. I liked this story because it has a happy ending.

BOY SCOUTS...

Continued from Page 6

frontal. The trend is to try to coerce rather than openly compel. For instance, there's the scheme of shunning, as practiced in San Francisco, where local judges are now barred from participating in Scouting. There's stigmatizing, as Connecticut has attempted by dropping the Scouts from the list of charities that state employees can support through payroll deduction. There's singling out for the withholding of public benefits, as Berkeley has done by starting to charge a Scout-affiliated group, the Sea Scouts, for use of the city's marina. No other nonprofit faces such a requirement. High school teacher Eugene Evans now must pay \$532 a month out of his pocket so the Sea Scouts' ship can berth in the marina and 20 or so boys can sail the Bay on weekends and learn carpentry and plumbing by working on the ship during the week. Because he's covering berthing costs, Evans can no longer afford to pay membership fees for boys from poorer neighborhoods around Oakland and Berkeley. Some, including some black and Latino kids, have had to drop out.

These anti-Scout ploys raise constitutional issues by attempting to do indirectly what the Supreme Court has said cannot be done directly—force Scouting to abandon its First Amendment rights. A long, twilight struggle of legal battles is assured.

The Scouts are learning that the totalitarian temptation survived the Berlin Wall; it's an impulse that isn't necessarily confined to nations patrolled by tanks and jackboots. Totalitarian arrangements share a principle: independent, voluntary associations aren't allowed. A totalitarian

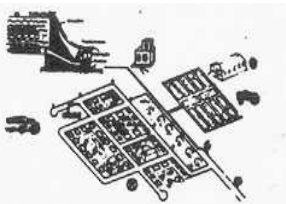
community "is made absolute by the removal of all forms of membership and identification which might, by their existence, compete with the new order," wrote sociologist Robert Nisbet. "It is, further, made absolute by the insistence that all thought, belief, worship, and membership be within the structure of the State."

Tocqueville saw this phenomenon in fledgling form on his home continent 170 years ago: "In all European nations some associations cannot be formed until the state has examined their statutes and authorized their existence. In several countries efforts are made to extend this rule to all associations. One can easily see whither success in that would lead."

The Scouts' fight, then, is for the survival of an authentically private sector—a sphere where beliefs can be embraced and explored without preclearance, editing or censorship by the state.

"They hate freedom." President Bush's words about terror networks also describe the bullies who would force Scouting to march to a new and "progressive" tune. By standing their ground, the Scouts put themselves on the front line of today's war against tyranny, as surely as the soldiers tracking Al-Qaida or any battalions that might be bound for Baghdad.

The Pacific Legal Foundation may be contacted by calling 916-362-2932, or going to the PLF website: www.pacificlegal.org



Marcos A. Devers J., P.E.

President / Registered Professional Engineer

**118 Woodland Street
Lawrence, MA 01841**

**Beeper: (978) 545-4945
Tel: (978) 685-5691
Fax: (978) 686-8715
Email: mdjinc1025@aol.com**

Smith v. Smedile N. A. Selectman Race

Continued from Page 1

and police. Ms. Smedile supports the raises. There is a clear difference between the two of us and I intend to campaign hard to let the people know what those differences are."

Rosemary Smedile is finishing up her first term on the Board of Selectmen. She is campaigning on her experience and accomplishments. "I'm very proud of my accomplishments," Smedile said. "I helped to write the most restrictive regulations for adult entertainment in the country. I negotiated with Brooks School for a new police cruiser and I am very proud of the fact that North Andover's bond rating has improved during the roughest economic period in years."

During a televised debate sponsored by the League of Women Voters, Smedile talked about the town's need for low income housing. Smith said he concerned about the state's 40B statute overriding local zoning laws. Smith is a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The two also differed on the trash transfer station. "It is really a recycling facility that will separate construction material," Smedile said. She also lamented that there was "a lot of misinformation" about the facility. "It will pose no health hazard to the town," she said. Smith, however, said the Board of Selectmen shouldn't be making the decisions about the trash facility, "I think it should be left up to the Board of Health. It's a Board of Health issue. I think we should put it in the hands of the health professionals and let them decide."

Smedile, who is a *registered* Republican, has lost much of her support from fellow Republicans who actively worked to get her elected three years ago. Members of the Republican Town Committee said they are not supporting Smedile this year because she actively campaigned for a four million-dollar proposition 2 ½ override to increase school spending.

Finally, with respect to the issue of open government, Joe Smith said he would have accepted the invitation of the Finance Committee to hold a public forum to discuss the FY'05 town budget. Ms. Smedile voted not to participate.

North Andover Town Elections Tuesday, March 30th

Voting Locations by Precinct

Precincts 1 & 2: Middle School
Precincts 3 & 4: Atkinson School
Precincts 5 & 6: Franklin School
Precincts 7 & 8: Sargent School
Polls Are Open from 7AM to 8PM

Three Way Race for Andover School Committee Election Day, March 23rd

Dr. Charles Ormsby

Deso Opposes Overrides



Tom Deso decided to run for School Committee because he says the budget increase of \$700,000, proposed by Superintendent Claudia Bach to bring Andover up to the state-mandated 990 hours for "Time and Learning", was not necessary.

Deso noted that the state does not keep records of each district's compliance with this requirement and that the state made an issue of this for Andover only because of a complaint. Deso believes that Andover's "Time and Learning" estimate of approximately 860 hours is due to overly conservative accounting by the school administration.

"We are not counting things that are counted by other districts," claimed Deso. "Probably no school in the state meets the 990 hour requirement when counting only academic subjects. Even the state said we're using a very conservative method to calculate 'Time and Learning'."

Deso also sees a need to "increase communications and the credibility of the School Committee." In this context he cited the recent controversy surrounding renewal of Superintendent Bach's contract as an "indication of the method of operation (of the School Committee) that needs to be changed." Deso said he "didn't oppose the action taken on Superintendent Bach's contract, up to the point of not making it public."

Another priority for Deso is to improve the way the School Department and Town work together on budget issues. Deso believes that the School Department should develop its initial budget within estimated available revenues. While he wants the process improved, Deso believes that "the current year split of town funds is reasonable." In addition, Deso indicated that he would not support a Proposition 2 ½ override to increase school funding.

Deso believes that development and recommendation of academic programs are the responsibility of the administration. The School Committee's responsibility is to approve these within budget constraints. Regarding student and parent requests for an advanced math program for the Middle School, he said the administration is responding by offering an on-line course for higher

Continued on Page 15

Collins Seeks 3rd Term



Dick Collins is no stranger to Andover residents or the Andover school community. Collins served at the High School for 38 years both as a teacher (AP US History) and as a very successful track and football coach. After two, three-year terms on the School Committee, 'Coach' Collins is vying for yet a third term. "I feel my whole life has revolved around Andover, the kids and the schools. I just want to keep doing it." Collins cited three key issues/priorities he will emphasize in his campaign:

"First, I want to maintain programs and services. I don't want to see anything go. We have a great educational system and we need to maintain it. You just don't know what in the school is the salvation (for a given) child."

"The second big issue is to find the money to do this (maintain programs and services)" Asked what the outlook was for finding the money he said, "The prospects are not very good."

Collins stated that his third priority is "not losing teachers."

Regarding the recent Executive Session discussions of Superintendent Bach's contract, Collins said, "These were not commitments until they were to come out in open session and be voted on. (Pre-contract negotiations) are routinely conducted in executive session. It was perfectly appropriate." Collins feels the controversy arose due to the repetitive use of the word "secrecy" in the press and felt the School Committee was "just following Executive Session procedures like everyone else in Massachusetts."

Collins said he does not support MCAS as a graduation requirement. In response to a written question Collins wrote: "We must maintain high academic standards but there are great kids in the schools that are just poor test takers through no fault of their own. They may have very good grades, be extremely hard workers, excellent contributors to the school and outstanding school citizens. They should not be punished."

On Special Education costs that, in total, are estimated to consume 28-30% of next year's budget, Collins remarked that he "was 100% in favor of Special Education but that the State can't mandate this to us and force us to fund it out of Regular

Continued on Page 15

Silberstein Seeks Write-Ins



Jumping into the school committee race late means that Debora Silberstein needs voters to write in her name or use the stickers that she will

distribute to voters and make available at the polls. While it is usually an uphill battle to win as a sticker candidate, Silberstein will be doing everything possible, including having large "how to" posters at the polls to make sure her supporters can easily register a vote for her. Stickers will be mailed to all voters who have voted in recent town elections along with instructions for use (see insert).

Silberstein, 44, is a lawyer and owns her own law firm in downtown Andover focusing on estate planning and elder law. She attended Syracuse University and Hofstra Law School and has lived in Andover for 20 years with her husband and three children (19, 17, and 11; the youngest two currently attending Andover public schools).

While raising a family and building her career, Silberstein has been active in town affairs including being a member of the Finance Committee for 4 years, Moderator of town-wide PTO, PTO president, Member of the Council on Aging, Member of the Board of SHED (an after-school Kindergarten program), and Vice Chair of the Merrimack Valley Community Foundation.

The three top issues that drive the Silberstein candidacy are:

- Ø A desire to "restore trust by opening up communications and providing straight talk on the budget",
- Ø Providing a balanced perspective based on her Finance Committee, Council on Aging, and school activities experiences, and
- Ø Improving school management based on her experience with finance.

With regard to restoring trust, Silberstein commented that the recent discussion/decision in Executive Session to extend Superintendent Claudia Bach's contract should have been communicated to the public "to provide an opportunity for the public to be heard."

When asked whether she would honor recent requests by students and parents to implement an advanced math program in

Continued on Page 15

(617) 922 1824

Vincent A. J. Errichetti

Political Consulting, Marketing and Fundraising

24 Bryant Street
Woburn, MA 01801

VErrichetti@aol.com

 **M. Steinert & Sons**
Steinway & other pianos of distinction

Stephen P. Dawe

Manager



The area's only authorized Steinway dealer

Sherwood Plaza, 1298D Worcester St. Natick, MA 01760

Tel: 508-655-7373 * Fax: 508-655-6566 * Email: steved@msteinert.com

Liberty.....Continued from page 3

But what if the group infringes liberties to further a “public good”? What individual liberties are to be traded for this public good? What level of control or expropriation is to be permitted? Should it be concentrated on a few or thinly spread over many? What level of infringement will we accept? If the enslavement of a few eases the suffering of many do we permit it? If not today, then what about tomorrow? Do we sacrifice more rights for the benefit of children and their education or for healthcare and the elderly? Which rights do we give up first: The right to free association? To freedom from search and seizure? The right to self defense? The right to trade without interference? Freedom of the press? Freedom of assembly? Freedom of speech? Does the ballot box become merely a front for coercion, mob rule, and socially acceptable theft?

When we constrain by force one’s right to act, including the right to possess, use, and trade property, we have violated the most basic right of man. We have abridged a person’s right to protect, maintain and improve their life and the lives of their loved ones. Once we have accepted the premise that any group, including governments however constituted, can violate these basic liberties, there is no limit to the horrors that are possible. It starts with the principle that the good of the majority (or substitute any popular alternative: society, the children, the poor, the elderly, the disabled, ...) takes precedence over the rights of any single individual.

Once accepted, this principle inexorably corrodes the foundations of human relations. It may take decades, but eventually one class of society gains



-Frederic Bastiat, The Law, 1850


" No legal plunder: This is the principle of justice, peace, order, stability, harmony, and logic."

sufficient strength to subjugate another and civility loses its grip. The result: Slavery, Holocaust, Gulag, Killing Fields, Lao Gai. Throughout history Governments have committed more murders (not including wars) than all individual acts of murder combined. It only happens where Liberty is rejected as the model for human relations.

Liberty is an inconvenient notion if you have political power and want to advance a particular special interest. If you embrace Liberty, you need to use peaceful persuasion and voluntary trade to obtain desired goods and services. This requires thought and effort. The alternative is to discard Liberty so you can compel others to give up their property and services against their wishes. Our forefathers recommended the former. Our current practice is the latter. This is not a minor change. It is fundamental. It will ultimately determine whether our future is peaceful and prosperous, with a generous dose of goodwill or not.

Parades, anthems, monuments and national holidays are nice, but I prefer the real thing.

You can e-mail your comments to Dr. Chuck Ormsby at ccormsby@comcast.net



GRAPHIC LITHO

Large Format Printing

Ralph Wilbur

sales@graphiclitho.com

130 Shepard St.
Industrial Park
Lawrence, MA 01843

Tel: 978-683-2766 - Fax: 978-681-7588

Paula L. Porten



Attorney At Law

Specializing in
Marital Mediation


Tarshi Law Office

510 Essex Street, Lawrence, MA 01840

Tel: (978) 686-1821 Fax: (978) 688-0290

Big lie of the year

Thomas Sowell



It may be too early in this election year to determine which will be the biggest of the Big Lies in this political campaign. However, my feeling is that it may be “the working poor.” While there are working people who are poor, most poor people are not working full time, not working very long, or not working at all.

These are not matters of opinion. Census data make it unmistakably clear. When it comes to full-time year-around workers, there are more heads of households who fall into that category in the top 5 percent of income earners than in the bottom 20 percent — in absolute numbers.

There was a time when you could legitimately contrast the idle rich and the working poor. But that time is long gone. Nevertheless, the image is still politically useful, so you are likely to see that image invoked again and again by candidates practicing divide and conquer politics, sometimes known as class warfare or by its more fashionable name, “social justice.”

There is even a book by a New York Times reporter titled “The Working Poor.” It was previewed by a long article in the New York Times and then given a huge and favorable review in — you guessed it — the New York Times. Journalistic incest lives.

The thesis of both media liberals and political liberals is that there are vast millions of people who work hard all their lives and still remain poor. The next chorus of this song is that only the government can save the day for such people. The grand finale is that politicians need to take more money out of your paycheck to buy the votes of those to whom they give it.

They don’t express it like that, of course, but that is what it amounts to.

Are there genuinely poor people who stay poor? Yes. However grossly exaggerated the numbers, there are such people. But studies that follow the same individuals over time find that most of those in the bottom 20 percent of income earners are also in the top 20 percent at some other time in their careers.

Only a fraction of the people who are in the bottom 20 percent in income at any

given time will be there for more than a few years. Of those whose pay is at or near the minimum wage, for example, most are young people or part-time workers, or both.

How much political traction can you get by wringing your hands over some high-school or college kid who is picking up a few bucks flipping hamburgers, while living with mom and dad?

The solution to this problem, in both the liberal media and among liberal politicians, is to ignore the typical person who is simply passing through the lower income brackets on his way up and talk exclusively about the atypical person who stays at the bottom for life.

By focussing on those who work hard all their lives and still remain poor-no more than 3 percent of the population-and telling their personal stories endlessly, liberals can present the Big Lie with a human face.

There is an even bigger lie behind all this. That lie is the implication that the purpose of all this hand-wringing is to help the poor. But the poor are just the bait in a political bait-and-switch game.

The fraud becomes apparent the moment anyone suggests that there be means tests, so that the taxpayers’ money will be spent only on the poor.

Those who pose as the biggest champions of the poor are almost invariably the biggest opponents of means tests. They want bigger government and the poor are just a means to that end.

Whether the issue is housing, medical care or innumerable other things, the argument will be made that the poor are unable to get some benefit that the government ought to provide for them. But the minute you accept that, the switch takes place and suddenly we are no longer talking about some benefit confined to the poor but about “universal health care” or “affordable housing” as a “right” for everyone.

Bait and switch advertising is illegal when unscrupulous businesses engage in it. But it is standard operating procedure in politics. Especially during election years.

Thomas Sowell is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305.
His Web site is www.tsowell.com.
COPYRIGHT 2004 CREATORS SYNDICATE, INC.

James Cassidy, Senior Centers

Continued from page 10

- Daily lunches, nutritious hot meals served at the center
- Friendly visitors and telephone assurance to check on and offer companionship to our most vulnerable seniors
- Medical transportation, for those in need to doctors and hospitals
- Heart to Heart (bereavement support) blends companionship, support and understanding. And this is just a fraction of the programs available including lectures, hobbies, cards and of course BINGO!

Check your own center's newsletters for specific programs that are available on a daily basis or have a loved one or a neighbor call us.

This being my opening salvo and not knowing just what to cover (thus my title Senior Moments) I am pleased to be able to talk to you all.

In future columns we might cover some specifics—the acute problem of being a senior in this affluent society or maybe spotlight some outstanding senior citizen.

We’ll just have to see, but let me know if you have any good ideas or what is bothering you. In the meantime, stay well and have a good day.

You can write to James Cassidy at Cassperryst@aol.com or send a letter to James Cassidy, 47 Brightwood Ave, N. Andover MA 01845

From the Rabbi's Desk

Rabbi Robert S. Goldstein
Temple Emanuel of Andover Massachusetts



There has been a great deal of controversy surrounding last month's release of Mel Gibson's movie "The Passion." The film graphically recreates the last twelve hours of Jesus' life, from his trial to his bloody crucifixion. While the Romans were responsible for both, the Jews of that time were not unhappy with the outcome. In their mind Jesus' preachments were seditious and subversive and threatened the authority of the Jewish leadership of the day.

Many rabbis and heads of Jewish organizations feel the movie is anti-Semitic. I believe the film reflects the New Testament's anti-Jewish bent. Hundreds of years of anti-Semitism did not come from thin air; its roots, as so many historians like James Carroll and Father Edward Flannery have written, come directly from the gospels of the New Testament.

Mel Gibson, is a very conservative Catholic. His father is an avowed Holocaust denier. The Gibsons—father and son—may not like Jews, but the movie *is* an accurate portrayal of the role Jews played in the crucifixion story, according to the New Testament.

Will the movie revive old anti-Semitic invectives against Jews? Will Jewish kids be called "Christ killers" by their Christian friends? I think not.

First, when most Christians see the movie and its somewhat negative

portrayal of Jews, they will not think of their Jewish neighbor up the street, just like when Jews see the movie Exodus, they tend not to relate it to modern Egyptians. Secondly, I do not believe movies, books, or even news articles that portray Jews in a negative light create anti-Semites. Anti-Semites exist. True, in their minds, this movie may justify their contempt, but it will not produce new anti-Semites.

Christian Evangelicals will see this movie in droves, and love it, and they are among Israel's (the modern Jewish state) strongest supporters. Go figure!

I would not necessarily recommend the movie, nor would I suggest a boycott. It needs to stand on its own merits, and I trust the public's judgment. I would however invite people to an important discussion to be held on *Wednesday evening, March 31st at Merrimack College*. Robert Leikind of the Anti-Defamation League, and Professor Paula Fredriksen of Boston University, one of the preeminent scholars of New Testament in the country, will join me and Professor Joe Kelly in a discussion of the movie and its implications.

More than anything, it is important to be informed. I hope you will join us for an important discussion of one of the more interesting religious issues of the year!

You can email Rabbi Goldstein at info@templemanuel.net or visit the Temple Emanuel on line at www.templemanuel.net

Collins...

Continued from Page 13

doing it, that's not the point. The state says, 'You do this. Take it out of Regular Ed.' It's a crime this has happened."

Regarding the request by some students and parents for an advanced math program at the Middle School, Collins commented on what he thought was the natural transition from classes combining all achievement levels in the elementary schools, to classes separated by achievement levels at the High School. While noting the Middle School was "in the middle", he concluded, "We need to find a way to meet the needs of all students. I may be at odds with the administration on this, but I see nothing wrong with having advanced math at the Middle School."

Asked about the need to impose student fees, Collins said, "It is a crying shame that we have to do this, but it is better than eliminating programs." Collins stated he was "concerned that athletics were singled out. The fee system is not universally applied. It hits athletics more than other things."

On the subject of increasing taxes through a Proposition 2 1/2 override Collins responded, "If necessary, I would support an override but hope it isn't necessary. The big key is state aid. We get very little state aid because we are a wealthy town, but we do not tax our wealth." In follow-up discussions Collins made a distinction between property values (which are taxed) and net wealth (that is not). He remarked that State Senator Sue Tucker was working on this issue.

Finally, when asked what he thought differentiates him from the other candidates Collins said that he knows all the candidates and "they are all very good people." The biggest difference, he said, is his "experience in education and in the Town of Andover."

Deso...

Continued from Page 13

achievement students, and that anything beyond this "is a budget issue."

On rising Special Education costs, Deso is unhappy about state mandated requirements that are un-funded or under-funded. Deso said that he supports Special Education, but he would also support a study of Special Education expenses. "In order to deal with a program with a large budget impact on the District, we need to understand the cause of the problem so we can deal with it."

With regard to MCAS, Deso wrote that MCAS "should not be a requirement for graduation. Students are graduated by school districts, not by the state."

On school choice (e.g., Charter schools or vouchers), Deso commented, "While I don't believe this would have a particular impact in Andover, as we have an excellent public school system, I do philosophically favor choice as a method of promoting excellence."

Deso, 56, is a graduate of the University of Virginia ('69) and owns his own business in New Hampshire that sells furniture to schools. He is currently on Andover's School Building Committee that has been overseeing the construction of the High Plain and Wood Hill Elementary Schools.

Silberstein...

Continued from Page 13

the Middle School, Silberstein favored continuing with the current heterogeneous classroom structure but indicated that she thought options should be explored for improving the ability of teachers to provide differentiated instruction to students at different achievement levels. In a written clarification she wrote, "The goals of every educator should be to challenge and allow each student to reach his or her maximum potential. The most efficient and effective use of our dollars is to provide teachers with the skills and tools they need to differentiate instruction."

Silberstein generally supported Superintendent Bach's proposal to add \$700,000 to the school budget to raise Andover to the state-mandated 990 hours of "Time and Learning" but thought that the courses to be provided by the new teachers need to be reviewed and that there may be ways to reduce the recommended budget increase.

On MCAS, Silberstein thought the MCAS requirement was here to stay. While she would not weigh in on whether she thought MCAS should be required for graduation, she mentioned that possibly other "determinants" (e.g., a portfolio of student work) might be added.

Asked about other key education issues, Silberstein responded:

- Ø Both smaller class sizes and teacher quality were effective and efficient means of improving academic achievement.
- Ø Merit pay was described as "Conceptually a good idea" but that "implementation is difficult" and there are "unforeseen costs."
- Ø "Special Education is both a problem and a solution" – "a problem because it is an unfounded mandate" and "a solution because it has improved performance ... for students with learning differences."
- Ø On school choice (typically referring to Charter Schools or education vouchers) Silberstein said, "More alternatives are needed within the public school system"

And finally, asked whether she would support a Proposition 2 1/2 override to increase school funding Silberstein responded, "There are opportunities within existing revenues to close the revenue gap."

How to Write In A Candidate For Office

1. If you have received a sticker from a candidate or their campaign supporters, bring the sticker with you to the polls (otherwise they will be provided by campaign workers at the polls)
2. Place a write-in sticker in the 'write-in space' on your ballot under the appropriate office your candidate is seeking (School Committee, Selectman, etc.)
3. After affixing your sticker to the appropriate space, fill in the circle next to your sticker to indicate you are voting for the write-in candidate.
4. If you do not have a sticker write in the name and address of your candidate and fill in the circle.
5. Always double check your ballot to make sure you have placed your sticker on correctly. If you have any questions, your poll workers will be happy to assist.

ELECT

Rosemary Connelly Smedile *Selectman*

Accomplishments

- * Airport Industrial Park, agreement between the City of Lawrence and the Town of North Andover, economic development and job creation
- * Host community agreement with Maritime pipeline generated \$217,785
- * Rezoned land on Route 114 for economic development, Eaglewood development, high end retail mall with projected \$300,000 in new tax revenue
- * Negotiated new agreement with Wheelabrator significantly reducing solid waste costs
- * Negotiated new police cruiser, donated by Brooks School
- * Town Hall renovation
- * Adopted one of the most comprehensive adult entertainment rules and regulations in the country
- * Implemented trash truck route
- * Rezoned land on Sharpners Pond Road for ice skating facility and economic development
- * Airport noise abatement program
- * Support public safety, crime statistics down, maintain second ambulance
- * Lease agreement for Osgood Hill Cell Tower
- * North Andover Commission on Housing Issues, establishing town policy on affordable housing
- * Maintained Town's bond rating, outlook changed from stable to positive during nationwide economic downturn and reductions in state aid. North Andover also given highest rating for short term borrowing.

Lets Keep the Momentum Going! Please Vote Tuesday March 30th

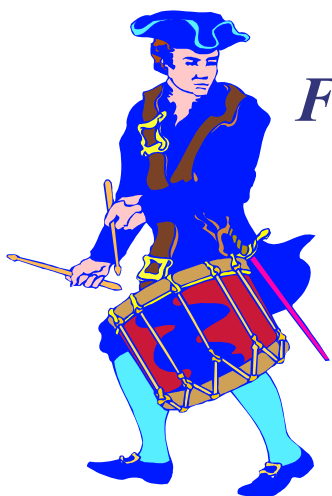
Paid for by the Friends of Rosemary Connelly Smedile, Gloria Wedge Connelly, Treasurer



Personal
Married 22 years to Jim Smedile, three sons, Christopher age 20, Ryan age 17, and Timmy age 13

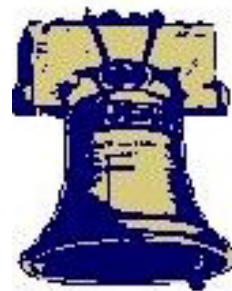
Education
-B.A. with Honors Boston College
-N. Andover High School

Business
Connelly Real Estate, Inc., Partner 1983 - Present



Subscribe to The Valley Patriot!

For \$14 a year you can have The Valley Patriot delivered to your mailbox



The **Valley Patriot**

47 Brightwood Ave, North Andover, MA 01845



Tara Michael Gift Baskets

...feature the finest wines and specialty foods from

All Things Sicilian,

Lollipop Tree, and Stonewall Kitchen.

When giving a gift make a lasting impression with a stylish combination of fine wine and great food. Our gift baskets are suitable for all occasions.

Custom Baskets available

To arrange for free delivery in the Merrimack Valley,

Visit us on the web at
www.taramichaelbaskets.com
or call 978-682-6801

Donovan's Liquors

175 South Broadway, Lawrence

978 -685 - 6811



Open: Monday - Saturday (9am - 11pm)

Sundays Noon - 8pm

Beer - Selection of Fine Wines - Liquor - Lottery



157 So. Broadway Lawrence, MA 01843

978 - 687 - 1155

OPEN

M-F 7:30 - 5:30 Sat 7:30 - 12:00

Major Credit Cards and Personal

Checks Accepted

LUBE, OIL & FILTER SPECIAL

\$14.95

save \$16

Up to 5 qts. of Oil 10W30



Approved Auto Repair

We Do
Inspection
Stickers!

Wheel Alignment

\$29.95

Save \$30

4 Wheel Alignment Extra